

THE MENTAL BODY

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DEDICATION

**This book, like its two predecessors,
is dedicated with gratitude and appreciation to those
whose painstaking labour and researches
have provided the materials out of which it has been compiled**

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INTRODUCTION

This book is the third of the series dealing with man's bodies, its two predecessors having been The Etheric Body and The Astral Body. In all three, identically the same method has been followed: some forty volumes, mostly from the pens of Annie Besant and C.W. Leadbeater, recognised to-day as the authorities par excellence on the Ancient wisdom in its guise of modern Theosophy, have been carefully searched for data connected with the mental body; those data have been classified, arranged and presented to the student in a form as coherent and sequential as the labours of the compiler have been able to make it.

Throughout this series no attempt has been made to prove, or even to justify, the statements made, except in so far as their own internal evidence and reasonability justify them. The bonafides of these veteran investigators and teachers being unquestionable, the results of their investigations and their teachings are here set out, without evasion or reservation of any kind, so far as possible in their own words, modified and abridged only where necessary to suit the

requirements of an orderly and logical presentation of the subject-matter.

The question of proof is an entirely separate issue, and one, moreover, of vast dimensions. To have attempted to argue or prove the statements made would have defeated the primary object of these books, which is to lay before the serious student a condensed synthesis, within reasonable compass, of the teachings from the sources named regarding the bodies of man and the planes or worlds to which these belong. Those who desire proofs must search for them elsewhere.

The fact that, after some two and a half years of intensive study of the writings of the two authors named, no discrepancies or contradictions, beyond, [xii] literally, two or three of trifling moment, have been discovered, constitutes a striking testimonial to the faithfulness in detail of the investigators, and to the coherence of the Theosophical system.

As in the two preceding volumes, marginal references have been given in order that the student may, if he wish, verify for himself any statement made at the original sources. The indices of the series of three books, together with the marginal references, thus virtually constitute in themselves a fairly complete index to everything dealing with the etheric, astral, and lower mental worlds in the writings of Annie Besant and C.W. Leadbeater.

It is hoped that there will be added to the series in due time a fourth volume, on The Causal Body.

As already mentioned, by far the greater part of the material presented in this book, has been obtained directly from the writings of Dr. Besant and Bishop Leadbeater. The works of H. P. Blavatsky are not included in the list of authorities quoted. To have searched the Secret Doctrine for references to the Mental Body and the Mental Plane would, frankly have been a task beyond the powers of the compiler, and would, also, in all probability have resulted in a volume too abstruse for the class of student for whom this series of books is intended. The debt to H. P. Blavatsky is greater than ever could be indicated by quotations from her monumental volumes. Had she not shown the way in the first instance, later investigators might never have found the trail at all, let alone made it into a path where others may follow with comparative ease and safety.

A.E. Powell.

CHAPTER I

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Before proceeding to describe in detail the mental body of man, its functions, and the part it plays in his life and evolution, it will be useful to give a brief outline of the ground which our study will cover.

First, we shall have to consider the mental body as the vehicle through which the Self manifests as concrete intellect, in which are developed the powers of the mind, including those of memory and imagination, and which, in the later stages of man's evolution, serves as a separate and distinct vehicle of consciousness, in which the man can live and function quite apart from both his physical and his astral bodies.

At the outset the student must realise quite clearly that in occult psychology the mental equipment of man is divided into two distinct portions: [a] the mental body, which deals with particulars, with what are known as concrete thoughts: eg., a particular book, house, triangle, etc. ; [b] the causal body which deals with principles, with abstract thoughts: eg., books or houses in general, the principle of triangularity common to all triangles. The mental body thus deals with rupa or form-thoughts, the causal body with arupa or formless thoughts. A rough analogy may be taken from mathematics : arithmetic, dealing with particular numbers, belongs to the lower form aspect of mind : algebra, which deals with symbols representing numbers in general, belongs to the higher or formless aspect of mind. The terms form and formless are, of course, used not in an absolute, but in a relative sense. Thus a cloud or a flame while possessing form are yet formless relatively to, say, a house or a log of wood.

Next we shall have to deal with that strange, semi-intelligent, and intensely active life-substance known as the Mental Elemental Essence, and the part it plays in helping man to think. The details of the structure and composition of the mental body will next engage our attention, and this will be followed by a description of typical examples of mental bodies of men at various stages of development.

A prominent feature in our study will be an examination of Kama-Manas, that association, or entanglement, between Desire and Thought, in terms of which it would perhaps be possible to write a history, both of the human race as a whole, and of every individual man. So intimate, in fact, is this entanglement that some schools of thought go so far as to class the astral and the mental bodies of man as one vehicle of consciousness, as indeed they are, for practical purposes, for the great majority of mankind.

The twofold action of thought in its own world must be described: viz., the radiation of waves of thought, and the formation, and in many cases the projection into space, of thought-forms. The effects which these two classes of phenomena produce on their creators and on other men must be examined when we come to deal with Thought-Transference, which, for convenience, we shall consider as Unconscious and as Conscious, the later division including Mental Healing, of which a brief outline will be given.

It will be necessary to consider the effect which the physical body, and, in fact, physical surroundings in general, produce on the mental body and its workings; conversely, we must examine the effects which the mental body produces on the physical body and on other physical objects.

Then it will be necessary to treat of the astral body in a similar manner: viz., how it influences the mental body, and how the mental body in its turn influences the astral body.

Then we shall turn to the mental body itself and show how it operates, how its faculties may be developed and trained both when working through the physical brain, and also when it is operating on its own account as an independent vehicle of consciousness.

This naturally leads us to the more deliberate training of the mental body, embracing Concentration, that sine qua non of an effective mental life; Meditation, and finally, Contemplation, leading to mystic consciousness.

The use of the mental body during sleep of the physical body will be briefly dealt with, and then a short description of that artificial and temporary mental body known as the ayavi Rupa will be added.

The life after physical and astral death, i.e., on the mental plane itself, will next occupy our attention. This will have to be dealt with at some length, for we have to study the general principles underlying the course of that mental life and many of its details. We must further examine shortly typical examples of life on each of the four lower mental sub-planes, in what the Theosophist calls Devachan, the Christian "Heaven".

After proceeding so far we shall be in a position to have grasped the reality and possibilities of the mental plane regarded as a world in itself, and we shall therefore study it as such a world, examining the nature of the life there, and the general character of its phenomena.

Amongst all these we shall find the Thought-Centres, which constitute an interesting and important feature. From these we shall pass to the Akashic Records, that wonderful and infallible Memory of nature in which everything is remembered and recorded, so that it may be read by anyone possessing the necessary qualifications.

A chapter will then be devoted to the inhabitants of the Mental Plane, and then, as man passes out of the lower mental plane on the death of his mental body, we shall follow him just sufficiently to gain a glimpse of his wider and fuller life on the higher mental, or causal plane.

Having thus traced the pilgrimage of the man through physical death [vide [The Etheric Double](#)], his course through the astral plane [vide The Astral Body] and, in this volume, followed him to the threshold of his true home, the causal or higher mental world, we can gain

some idea of the relationship between the man in his three lower vehicles, those of the Personality, and the true man in his causal body, the Soul or Individuality. This aspect of our study will be dealt with in the chapter on the Personality and the Ego.

Then we take up the history once again as the man emerges from his “home” on his descent to re-birth in the lower worlds.

Finally, a chapter will be devoted to the life of the man who has reached the stage where he is worthy to be accepted as a Chela or Disciple by those masters of the Wisdom who, as the Elder Brethren of humanity, serve Their younger brothers with such unerring wisdom, such tireless patience, such never-failing and infinite love. For it is today within the reach of many a man who will address himself to the task of making himself worthy, to be trained by Them to assist, in however small a measure, in Their work for the service of the world, and it is also possible to set out, more or less categorically, the qualifications necessary before that inestimable privilege can be conferred.

CHAPTER II

MENTAL ELEMENTAL ESSENCE

Before we can study fruitfully the mental body, either as to its composition, structure, or methods of functioning, it is necessary to describe [though in general outline only] what is known as Mental Elemental Essence.

The student will recollect that after the formation of the atomic states of matter in each of the planes of nature, the Third Aspect of the Trinity [the Holy Spirit the Life giver, in Christian terminology] pours Himself down into the sea of virgin matter [the true Virgin Maria] and, by His vitality, awakens the atomic matter to new powers and possibilities, resulting in the formation of the lower sub-divisions of each plane.

Into matter thus vivified the Second great Outpouring of the Divine Life descends; again in Christian terminology, the Son is “incarnated of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary”.

This Outpouring of the Divine Life is called by various names at various stages of Its descent. Regarded as a whole it is often spoken of as a Monadic essence, more especially when clothed only in atomic matter of the various planes, because it has then become fit to be used to supply permanent atoms to Monads.

When it ensouls non-atomic, *i.e.*, molecular matter, it is called Elemental Essence a name, borrowed from mediaeval occultists; it was bestowed by them on the matter of which the bodies of the nature-spirits were composed, for they spoke of these as “Elementals”.

When on its downward course it energises the matter of the three higher levels of the mental plane, it is known as the First Elemental Kingdom.

After spending a whole Chain Period in that evolution, it descends to the four lower levels of the mental plane, and there ensouls the Second Elemental Kingdom for another Chain period: here it is known as Mental Elemental Essence.

The next Chain Period is spent on the astral plane, where it is called the Third Elemental Kingdom, or Astral Elemental Essence.

[A Chain Period is the time occupied by the passage of the life-wave seven times round the seven globes of a Chain. There are thus forty-nine globe or world periods in each Chain Period. For further details, see A [Textbook of Theosophy](#) by C. W. Leadbeater.]

Each of these three is a kingdom of nature, as varied in manifestations of its different forms of life as are the animal and vegetable kingdoms, with which we are more familiar. Moreover, on each kingdom there are, of course, the usual seven perfectly distinct types or “rays” of essence, each with its seven sub-types.

Both Mental and Astral Elemental Essence are intimately connected with man, with his bodies and his evolution, as we shall see more clearly as we proceed with our study of his mental body.

It is important to realise that both on the astral and mental planes, elemental essence is quite distinct from the mere matter of those planes.

Another point of great importance is that the life animating both mental and astral matter is upon the downward or outward arc of evolution: progress for it, therefore means to descend into denser forms of matter, and to learn to express itself through them.

For man, evolution is just the opposite of this: he has already sunk deeply into matter, and is now rising out of it towards his source. There is consequently a constant conflict of interests between the man within, and the life inhabiting the matter of his various vehicles. The full bearing of this supremely important fact we shall see more clearly in later chapters, as our subject unfolds.

CHAPTER III

COMPOSITION AND STRUCTURE

The mental body is built of particles of the four lower sub-divisions of the mental world, i.e., of

mental matter which corresponds to the four lower sub-divisions of astral matter, and to solid, liquid, gaseous and etheric matter of the physical plane.

The three higher grades of mental matter are used to build the Causal, or Higher Mental Body, with which we are not here concerned.

In addition to ordinary mental matter, the mental body contains also mental elemental essence, i.e., matter of the Second Elemental Kingdom.

The physical body, as we know, is built up of cells, each of which is a tiny separate life animated by the Second Outpouring, which comes from the Second Aspect of the Deity. The same thing applies in the astral and mental bodies. In the cell life which permeates them there is as yet nothing in the way intelligence but there is a strong instinct pressing downwards into matter, as we saw in the preceding chapter.

The shape of the mental body is ovoid, following that ovoid section of the causal body which alone of its characteristics can manifest in the lower worlds. The matter of the mental body, however, is not evenly distributed through out the egg. In the midst of the ovoid is the physical body, which strongly attracts astral matter: in its turn the astral matter strongly attracts mental matter. Consequently by far the greater part of the matter of both astral and mental bodies is gathered within the physical frame. To clairvoyant sight, therefore, the mental body appears as built of dense mist, of the shape of the physical body, and surrounded by an ovoid of much finer mist. For this reason, in the mental world an acquaintance is just as recognisable as in the physical world.

The portion of the mental body which projects beyond the periphery of the physical body forms the mental "aura".

The size of both the astral and mental bodies is the same as that of the causal body, or more accurately of the section of the causal body on the lower planes. Thus, unlike the physical body, which has remained substantially the same size since Atlantean days, the mental body grows in size as the man himself develops.

The particles of the mental body are in ceaseless motion. Moreover, they are constantly changing, the mental body automatically drawing to itself, from the general storehouse, matter that can maintain the combinations already existing in it.

In spite of the intensely rapid motion of the mental particles among themselves, the mental body has yet at the same time a kind of loose organisation. There are in it certain striations which divide it more or less irregularly into segments, each of these corresponding to a certain department of the physical brain, so that every type of thought should function through its duly assigned portion. The mental body is yet so imperfectly developed in ordinary men,

however, that there are many in whom a great number of special departments are not yet in activity, and any attempt at thought belonging to those departments has to travel round through some inappropriate channel which happens to be fully open. The result is that thought on those subjects is for those people clumsy and uncomprehending. That is why, as we shall see more fully in a later chapter, some people have a head for mathematics and others are unable to perform a simple mathematical process – why some people instinctively understand, appreciate and enjoy music, while others do not know one tune from another.

Good thoughts produce vibrations of the finer matter of the body, which by its specific gravity tends to float in the upper part of the ovoid: whereas bad thoughts, such as selfishness and avarice, are always oscillations of the grosser matter, which tends to gravitate towards the lower part of the ovoid. Consequently, the ordinary man who yields himself not infrequently to selfish thoughts of various kinds, usually expands the lower part of his mental body, and presents roughly the appearance of an egg with its larger end downwards. The man who has not indulged in those lower thoughts, but has devoted himself to higher ones, tends to expand the upper part of his mental body and therefore presents the appearance of an egg standing in its smaller end. All such appearances, however, are only temporary, the tendency being for the symmetry of the ovoid to re-assert itself by degrees.

From a study of the colours and striations of a man's mental body, the clairvoyant can perceive his character and the progress he has made in his present life. [From similar features of the causal body he can see what progress the ego has made since its original formation when the man left the animal kingdom.]

The mental body is more or less refined in its constituents, according to the stage of intellectual development at which the man has arrived. It is an object of great beauty, and delicacy and rapid motion of its particles giving it an aspect of living iridescent light, and this beauty becomes an extraordinary radiant and entrancing loveliness as the intellect becomes more highly evolved and is employed chiefly on pure and sublime topics. As we shall see in detail later, every thought gives rise to vibrations in the mental body, accompanied by a play of colour described as like that of the spray of a waterfall as the sunlight strikes it, raised many degrees in colour and vivid delicacy.

Every mental body has a single molecule or unit, usually called the mental unit, of the fourth mental sub-plane, which remains with the man during the whole of his incarnations. As we shall see in the course of our study, the materials of the mental body are scattered and re-gathered again and again, in life after life but the mental unit remains a stable centre the whole time.

The mental unit may be regarded as the heart and centre of the mental body, and upon the relative activity of the different parts of that unit the appearance of that body as a whole to a great extent depends.

The mental unit may, of course, belong to any one of the seven great “types “ or “rays” of matter: it should be noted that all the permanent atoms and the mental unit of a man belong to the same “type” or “ray”.

The mental unit thus corresponds, in the mental body, to the permanent atoms in the causal , astral, and etheric bodies.

The use of the permanent atoms, and of the mental unit, is to preserve within themselves, as vibrating powers, the results of all the experiences through which the bodies with which they have been associated have passed.

The various activities of the mind fall naturally into certain classes or divisions, and these divisions are expressed through different parts of the mental unit. Mental units are by no means all the same. They differ greatly, according to the type, and to the development of their owners. If a mental unit lay at rest the force radiating from it would make a number of funnels in the mental body, just as the light shining through the slide in a magic lantern makes a large radiating funnel of light in the air between the lantern and the sheet.

In this case the surface of the mental body may be likened to the sheet because it is only at the surface that the effect becomes visible to one who is looking at the mental body from the outside; so that, if the mental unit were at rest there would be seen on the surface of the mental body a number of pictures in colour, representing the various types of thought common to the person with, presumably dark spaces between them. But the mental unit, like all other chemical combinations, is rotating rapidly on its axis, and the effect of this is that in the mental body there is a series of bands, not always quite clearly defined, nor always of the same width, but still readily distinguishable, and usually in about the same relative positions.

The student will by now be familiar with colours and their meaning, a full list being given [which is not considered necessary to repeat here] in The Astral Body pp.11-12.

Where aspirational thought exists it invariably shows itself in a beautiful little violet circle at the top of the ovoid of the mental body. As the aspirant draws near to the gateway of the Path this circle increases in size and radiancy, and in the Initiate it is a splendid glowing cap of the most lovely colour imaginable.

Below it often comes the blue ring of devotional thought, usually rather a narrow one, except in the case of the few whose religion is really deep and genuine.

Next to that, there may be the much broader zone of affectionate thought, which may be of any shade of crimson or rose-colour according to the type of affection which it indicates.

Near to the zone of affection, and frequently closely connected with it, there is found the orange band, which expresses proud and ambitious thought.

Again, in intimate relation with pride comes the yellow belt of intellect, commonly divided into two bands, denoting respectively the philosophical and the scientific types of thought. The place of this yellow colour varies much in different men; sometimes it fills the whole upper part of the egg, rising above devotion and affection, and in such a case pride is generally excessive.

Below the group just described, and occupying the middle section of the ovoid, is the broad belt devoted to concrete shapes –the part of the mental body from which all ordinary thought-forms issue. [These thought-forms will be described in Chapter VIII].

The principal colour here is green, shaded often with brown or yellow, according to the disposition of the person.

There is no part of the mental body which varies more widely than this. Some people have their mental bodies crowded with a vast number of concrete images, whereas others have only a few. In some they are clear and well outlined, in others they are vague and hazy to the last degree; in some they are classified, labeled and arranged in the most orderly fashion, in others they are not arranged at all, but are left in hopeless confusion.

In the lower part of the ovoid come the belts expressing all kinds of undesirable thoughts. A kind of muddy precipitate of selfishness often fills the lower third, or even half, of the mental body, and above this is sometimes a ring portraying hatred, cunning or fear. Naturally, as a man develops, this lower part vanishes, the upper part gradually expanding until it fills the whole body, as shown in the illustrations in *Man Visible and Invisible*, by Bishop Leadbeater.

The general rule is, the stronger the thought the larger the vibration; the more spiritual and unselfish the thought, the higher and more rapid is the vibration. Strength of thought produces brilliancy, spirituality produces delicacy of colour.

In a later chapter, we shall describe a few typical mental bodies, and indicate how various other mental qualities show themselves.

CHAPTER IV

FUNCTIONS

The mental body is the vehicle through which the Self manifests and expresses itself as the concrete intellect.

The mind is the reflection of the cognitional aspect of the Self, of the Self as Knower: the mind is the Self working in the mental body.

The majority of people are unable to separate the man from the mind; consequently, to them the Self, which they are seeking, is the mind.

This is the more natural, if not inevitable, because at the present stage of evolution men of the Fifth Race are working especially at the development of the mental body.

In the past the physical body has been vivified as a vehicle of consciousness: the astral body is also at least partially vivified by most men: the vivification of the mental body is the work upon which humanity should now be more especially engaged.

The development of the astral body, with its function of expressing kama, or emotion, was the special work of the Fourth Root Race, the Atlantean, as it is the special work of the Fourth Sub-Race of the Fifth Root Race, the Keltic.

As stated above, the quality which the Fifth Race –and this applies both to the Fifth Root Race and the Fifth Sub-Race –is intended specially to develop is manas or mind: that type of intellect that discriminates, that notes the differences between things.

At the present stage of half-development most men look for differences from their own point of view, not in order to understand so much as to resist them, even violently to oppose them. When the faculty is perfectly developed, however, differences will be noted calmly, solely for the purpose of understanding them and judging what is best.

We may go further and say that at the present stage of development of the Fifth Sub-Race, weakness in others is a field to exploit, a thing to enslave, something to trample under foot, in order to rise on it rather than to help it to exist for itself. Nevertheless, unpleasant as it may be in its earlier stages, this mental development is essential, for the true critical spirit is absolutely necessary for true progress.

The Sixth Root Race, as well as the Sixth Sub-Race of the Fifth Root Race, will be occupied principally with the development of spirituality, synthesis compassion, and eagerness to serve being strongly marked characteristics.

The stage of development of mind and emotion in the human race at the present time, however, calls for a little further explanation. The present or Fourth Round is primarily intended for the development of desire or emotion; the Fifth Round is intended for the unfolding of intellect. Owing however to the stimulus provided by the “Lords of the Flame” the intellect has already considerably developed a whole Round in advance of what we may call the normal programme. At the same time it should be understood that the intellect of

which man is today so proud is infinitesimal compared with that which the average man will possess at the culminating point of the next or Fifth Round.

The “Lords of Flame” came from the planet Venus to this earth during the Third Root Race, and at once took charge of our evolution. Their Leader is called in Indian books Sanat Kumara: with Him came three lieutenants, and some twenty-five other Adepts as assistants. About 100 ordinary human beings were also brought over from Venus and merged into the ordinary humanity of the earth.

It is these Great Ones who are spoken of in The Secret Doctrine as projecting a spark into the mindless men and awakening the intellect within them. Their action was really rather more in the nature of a magnetic stimulus, their influence drawing humanity towards Themselves, and enabling men to develop the latent spark and to become individualised.

Returning from this necessary digression, it must ever be remembered that, although for purposes of analysis and study it is necessary to separate man from the vehicles which he uses, yet the Self is one, however varying may be the forms in which it manifests itself. Consciousness is a unit, and the divisions we make in it are either [1] made for purposes of study, or [2] illusions due to our perceptive power being limited by the organs through which it works in the lower worlds.

The Self has three aspects: knowing, willing and energising; from these arise severally thoughts, desires and actions. Yet the whole Self knows, wills and acts. Nor are the functions wholly separated; when he knows, he also acts and wills; when he acts, he also knows and wills; when he wills, he also acts and knows. One function is predominant, and sometimes to such an extent as wholly to veil the others; but even in the intensest concentration of knowing – the most separate of the three—there is always present a latent energising and a latent willing, discernible as present by careful analysis.

A little further explanation may help towards understanding. When the Self is still, then is manifested the aspect of Knowledge, capable of taking on the likeness of any object presented [as we shall see in detail later on]. When the Self is concentrated, intent on change of state, then appears the aspect of Will. When the Self, in presence of any object, puts forth energy, to contact that object, then shows forth the aspect of Action. It will thus be seen that these three are not separate divisions of the Self, not three things joined into one or compounded, but that there is one indivisible whole, manifesting in three ways.

From the standpoint of Eastern Yoga, “mind” is simply the individualised consciousness –the whole of that consciousness, including activities. Yoga describes the process of consciousness thus: [1] awareness of objects, the aspect of intelligence, the dominant note of the mental plane; [2] desire to obtain objects, the aspect of desire, the dominant note of the astral plane; [3] endeavour to attain objects, the aspect of activity, the dominant note of the physical plane.

On the buddhic plane, cognition, as pure reason, predominates. Each of these aspects is present all the time, but one predominates at one time, another at another time.

Returning now to a more detailed examination of mind, we learn that abstract thinking is a function of the Self expressing itself through the higher mental or causal body : concrete thinking [as previously stated] is performed by the Self working in the mental body –the lower mental body, as it is sometimes called. The mechanism of concrete thinking we shall consider in detail presently.

It is also in the mental body that memory and imagination begin. The germ of memory lies in Tamas, the inertia of matter, which is a tendency to repeat vibrations once started, when acted upon by energy.

The mental body is thus the vehicle of the ego, of the real Thinker, who himself resides in the causal body. But, while the mental body is intended eventually to be the vehicle of consciousness on the lower mental plane, it also works on and through the astral and physical bodies in all manifestations that are usually called the “mind” in ordinary waking consciousness.

In detail the process is as follows : The act of concrete thinking sets in vibration the matter of the mental body. This vibration is transferred an octave lower, as it were, to the grosser matter of the thinker’s astral body; from that in turn the etheric particles of the brain are affected, and through them finally the denser grey matter of the dense body is brought into action. Thus before a thought can be translated into active consciousness on the physical brain all these successive steps must be taken.

The sympathetic nervous system is mostly connected with the astral body, while in the cerebrospinal system is [page 17] more under the influence of the ego working through the mental body.

The process described above may be elucidated a little further. Every particle in the physical brain has its astral counterpart, and this in turn has its mental counterpart. If then we suppose, for the purposes of our examination, that the whole of the physical brain be spread out so as to be one particle thick, we may further suppose that the corresponding astral and mental matter is also laid out in layers in a similar manner, the astral a little above the physical, the mental a little above the astral.

We thus have three layers of matter of differing density, all corresponding one to the other, but not joined in any way except that here and there wires of communication exist between the physical and astral particles, and between the astral and mental particles. That would fairly represent the condition of affairs in the brain of the average man.

When, therefore, such a man wishes to send a thought down from the mental to the physical level, the thought –owing to many channels not yet being open –may have to go out of its way, as it were, going laterally through the brain of mental matter until it can find a way down, passing eventually through a tube not at all suited to it, and then, when it reaches the physical level, having to move laterally again in the physical brain before it meets the physical particles which are capable of expressing it.

It is obvious that such a method is awkward and clumsy. We thus can understand why it is that some people have no comprehension of mathematics, or no taste for music, art, etc. The reason is that in the part of the brain devoted to that particular faculty or subject the communications have not yet been opened up.

In the Adept, the perfected man, every particle has its own wire or tube, and there is also full communication in every part of the brain alike. Hence every thought has its own appropriate channel, through which it can descend directly to the correspondingly appropriate material in the physical brain.

If we analyse the process of consciousness, in rough outline, working from the Not-Self inward to the Self, we observe first contact on the physical body from without : this contact is converted by the astral body into sensation; the sensation is transformed by the mental body into a precept; then the precepts are elaborated into concepts, thus preserving the ideal form which is the material for all possibility of future thought.

Every contact with the Not-Self modifies the mental body by re-arranging a part of its materials as a picture or image of the external object.

Thinking, on the form-side, is the establishment of relations between these images; on the life-side it consists of corresponding modifications within the Knower himself.

The peculiar work of the Knower is the establishment of relationships between the images formed in his mental body, the addition which he makes changing the images into thoughts.

When the Thinker re-forms the same images over and over again, the time-element, there appear memory and anticipation.

The consciousness thus working is further illuminated from above with ideas that are not fabricated from materials supplied by the physical world, but are reflected into it directly from the Universal Mind [see chapter XXVIII].

When a man reasons he is adding something of his own to the information contributed from outside. As his mind works on the materials supplied to it, it links perceptions together, blending the various streams of sensation onto one, combining them into one image. This work

of establishing relations, of synthesising, is, in fact, the peculiar work of the Knower; it is a speciality of the mind.

Such activity of the mental body acts on the astral body as said above, and this, again, on the etheric and dense bodies, and the nervous matter of the sense body then vibrates under the impulses sent into it. This action shows itself as electrical discharges, and magnetic currents play between the particles causing intricate inter-relations.

These leave what is called a nervous track, a track along which another current can run, say, across it. Hence, if a group of particles that were concerned in a particular vibration should again be made active by the consciousness repeating the same idea, the vibration runs readily along the track already formed, thus re-awakening the other group of particles into activity and presenting to the consciousness an associated idea.

This briefly, is the mechanism of associated ideas, the importance of which mental phenomenon is too well known to every student of psychology to need emphasis here.

It was indicated above that the peculiar work of the mind is that of establishing relations between objects of consciousness. This phrase covers all the varied processes of the mind. Hence the Hindu speaks of the mind as the sixth sense because it takes in the sensations that enter through the five senses and combines them into a single precept, making from them one idea. The mind has also been spoken of as the “Rajah” of the senses.

Hence, also, the meaning of the sutra, that the “vrttis”, or modes of the mind, are pentads”. The word pentad is used in the sense in which the chemist speaks of the valency, or power of forming combinations of an element. For the mind is like a prism which gathers up the five diverse rays of sensation from the organs of sense, the five ways of knowing, the Jnanendriyas, and combines them into one ray.

If we also take into account the five organs of action, the Karmendriyas, as well as the five organs of sense the Jnanendriyas, then the mind becomes the eleventh sense; hence in the Bhagavad Gita speaks of the “ten senses and the one” [XIII.5].

Referring, not to the mind as the sixth or the eleventh “sense”, but to the senses of the mental body itself, we find that they differ very much from the senses of the physical body. The mental body comes into contact with the things of the mental world as it were directly, and over its whole surface, becoming conscious all over itself of everything which is able to impress it at all. There are thus no distinct organs for sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell in the mental body; the word “senses” is, in fact a misnomer : it is more accurate to speak of the mental “sense”.

From this it is clear that, being able to communicate directly by thought -transference, without

having to formulate thoughts in words, the barrier of language, no longer exists on the mental plane, as it does on the astral plane

If a trained student passes into the mental world and there communicates with an other student, his mind, in “speaking”, speaks at once by colour, sound and form, so that complete thought is conveyed as a coloured and musical picture, instead of only a fragment of it being shown, as is the case on the physical plane, by the symbols we call words.

There are certain ancient books written by great Initiates in colour-language, the language of the Gods. The language is known to many chelas [i.e., pupils of Masters] and is taken, so far as form and colour are concerned, from the ‘speech’ of the mental world, in which, as already said, a single thought gives rise to form, colour and sound simultaneously.

It is not that the mind thinks in colour, a sound, or a form: it thinks a thought, which is a complex vibration in mental matter, and that thought expresses itself in all these ways by the vibrations it sets up. In the mental body, therefore, a man is freed from the limitations of his separate sense-organs, and is receptive at every point to every vibration which in the physical world would present itself as separate and different from its fellows.

The mental body of the average man today is much less developed, relatively, than the astral and physical bodies. The normal man, at the present stage of evolution, identifies himself with the brain - consciousness, the consciousness working in the cerebrospinal system. Here he feels himself, distinctly and consecutively, as ‘I’, only on the physical plane; that is, in the waking state.

Except so far as the cerebrospinal system is concerned, however, the consciousness of the average man works from the astral plane, from the realm of sensation.

But in the more highly evolved men of the Fifth Race the centre of consciousness is in the mental body, working from the lower mental world, the man being moved by ideas more than by sensations.

Thus the average man is conscious but not self-conscious, on the astral and mental planes. He recognises astral and mental changes within himself, but does not distinguish between those initiated by himself from within, and those caused by impacts from without on his astral and mental vehicles. To him, they are all alike changes within himself.

Hence, the physical plane alone is the only ‘real’ world for him, and all phenomena of consciousness belonging to the astral and mental worlds are what he calls ‘unreal’, ‘subjective’, ‘imaginary’. He regards them as created by his own ‘imagination’, and not as results of impacts upon his astral and mental bodies from external worlds. He is, in fact, an infant on the astral and mental planes.

Hence, in the undeveloped man, the mental body cannot function separately on the mental plane, as an independent vehicle of consciousness during his earth –life. When such a man exercises his mental faculties these must clothe themselves in astral matter before he can become conscious of their activity.

We may tabulate the principle functions of the mental body thus:

- [1] To serve as the vehicle of the Self for the purpose of concrete thinking.
- [2] To express such concrete thoughts through the physical body, working through the astral body, the etheric brain, and the cerebrospinal system.
- [3] To develop the powers of memory and imagination.
- [4] To serve, as evolution proceeds, as a separate vehicle of consciousness on the mental plane.

To these, must be added the further function [elucidation of which must perforce be left to a later chapter] : viz.:

- [5] To assimilate the results of experience gathered in each earth-life and to pass on their essence to the ego, the real man living in his causal body.

We may here note that the animal kingdom also employs mental matter to some extent. The higher domestic animals at least undoubtedly exercise the power of reason, although naturally the lines along which their reason can work are few and limited, and the faculty itself is far less powerful than is the case with human beings.

In the case of the average animal, only the matter of the lowest sub-division of the mental plane would be employed, but with the highly developed domestic animal the matter of the highest of the four lower levels might be to some degree utilised.

CHAPTER V

TYPICAL EXAMPLES

The mental body of a savage is illustrated in Man Visible and Invisible, Plate VI., opposite p. 87. So far as its colours are the same, the mental body agrees fairly with the astral body in a condition of repose; but it is also much more than this, for in it appears whatever has been developed in the man of spirituality and intellectuality. This might not, in the case of the savage, be much, but it would be of considerable importance later on, as we shall see in due course.

Examining such a body in detail we perceive at the top a dull yellow, which indicates some intellect, though the muddiness of the colour shows that it is applied exclusively selfish ends.

Devotion, denoted by grey-blue, must be a fetish-worship, largely tinged with fear and prompted by considerations of self-interest. Muddy crimson suggests a commencement of affection which must as yet be principally selfish also.

A band of dull orange implies pride, but of quite a low order. A large dash of scarlet expresses a strong tendency to anger, which would evidently blaze out upon very slight provocation.

A broad band of dirty green, which occupies so great a portion of the body, shows deceit, treachery and avarice – the latter quality being indicated by a brownish tint. At the bottom of the aura there is a sort of deposit of mud colour, suggesting general selfishness and the absence of any desirable quality.

In an undeveloped man the mental body contains but a small amount of mental matter, unorganised, and chiefly from the lowest sub-division of the plane. It is played on almost entirely from the lower bodies, being- set vibrating by emotional storms from the astral body. Except when stimulated by these astral vibrations, it remains almost quiescent, and even under their impulse is sluggish. No definite activity is generated from within, blows from the outer world being necessary to arouse distinct response.

Hence, the more violent the blows, the better for the progress of the man; riotous pleasure, anger, pain, terror, and other passions, causing whirlwinds in the astral body, stir the mental consciousness, which then adds something of its own to the impressions made on it from without.

The ordinary person uses matter of the seventh or lowest mental sub-plane only; that being very near to the astral plane, all his thoughts are coloured by reflections from the astral or emotional world. Very few people can as yet deal with the sixth sub-plane; great scientific men certainly use it a good deal, but unfortunately, they often mingle it with the matter of the lowest sub-plane, and then they become jealous of other people's discoveries and inventions. The matter of the fifth sub-plane is much more free from the possibility of astral entanglement. The fourth sub-plane, being next to the causal body, is far away from the possibility of entanglement with astral vibrations.

On Plate IX, opposite p. 93 of the work quoted, is illustrated the mental body of an ordinary man. In it is seen more in proportion of intellect [yellow], love [rose-pink], and devotion [blue]; there is also a marked improvement in their quality, the colours being much clearer.

Although the amount of pride is high as before, it is now at a higher level, the man being proud of his good qualities instead of merely of his brute force or cruelty.

A good deal of scarlet persists, indicating liability to anger; the green is decidedly better, indicating versatility and adaptability rather than deceit or cunning.

In the savage the green was lower down the aura, below the scarlet, because the qualities it represented needed for their expression a type of matter coarser than that needed by the scarlet of anger.

In the *average* man the green is above the scarlet in the aura, indicating that the type of matter it needs is less coarse than that required for the scarlet of anger. There has thus been an improvement in the general quality of matter in the mental body.

Although there is still a large proportion of the brown of selfishness in the aura, yet the colour is a trifle warmer and less grim than in the case of the savage.

Thus the mental body of the average man is much increased in size, shows a certain amount of organisation, and contains some matter from the sixth, fifth, and fourth sub-divisions of the mental plane.

As with the physical and astral, so with the mental body; exercise increases, disuse atrophies and finally destroys. Every vibration set up in the mental body causes a change in its constituents, throwing out of it the matter that cannot vibrate sympathetically, and replacing it by suitable materials drawn from the practically illimitable store around.

Plate XXII, opposite p. 121 in the same book, illustrates the mental body of a developed man. From this pride [orange], anger [scarlet], and selfishness [brown] have completely disappeared; the remaining colours have expanded so as to fill the whole oval, and have also so improved in tone as to give quite a different impression. As all thought of self has vanished from them, they are more refined and delicate. In addition there has appeared at the top of the aura a pure violet with golden stars, indicating the acquisition of new and greater qualities – to wit, spiritual aspiration.

The power from above, which radiates through the causal body of a developed man, acts also through his mental body, though with somewhat less force.

Allowing for the difference between what we may call the octaves of colour, i.e., between the hues belonging to the lower and the higher levels of the mental plane, the mental body has now become almost a reproduction of the causal body, just as the astral body is almost a copy, at its own lower level, of the mental body.

The mental body of a developed man thus becomes a reflection of the causal, because the man has learned to follow solely the promptings of the higher self, and to guide his reason exclusively by them. The colour in fact, which expresses a certain quality in the causal body expresses itself not only in the mental body but even in the astral body; the colour however,

as already stated, will be less delicate, less luminous and ethereal, as it descends to the lower planes.

In a *spiritually developed man* all the coarser combinations of mental matter have been eliminated so that it contains only the finer varieties of matter of the four lower mental subdivisions, and of these again the materials of the fourth and fifth sub - planes very much predominate over those of the sixth and seventh sub-planes. The mental body is thus responsive to all the higher workings of the intellect, to the delicate contacts of the higher arts, to the pure thrills of the loftier emotions. Such a body is rapidly becoming ready to reproduce every impulse from the real man in the causal body, the Thinker, which is capable of expression in lower mental matter.

Both the astral and mental bodies of a spiritual man should exhibit continually four or five splendid emotions – love, devotion, sympathy, and intellectual aspiration among them.

The mental body [and also the astral body] of an Arhat [one who has taken the Fourth Great Initiation] have very little characteristic colour of their own, but are reproductions of the causal body in so far as their lower octaves can express it. They have a lovely shimmering iridescence –a sort of opalescent, mother of pearl effect –far beyond either description or pictorial representation.

A *matter-of-fact* person has generally much of yellow in his mental body, and his various bands of colour are usually regular and in order. He has far less emotion and less imagination than the intuitional man, and, therefore, often in certain ways less power and enthusiasm; but, on the other hand, he is far less likely to make mistakes, and what he does will generally be well and carefully done.

It may be noted also that the scientific and orderly habit of mind has a distinct influence upon the arrangement of the colours in the astral body; they tend to fall into regular bands, and the lines of demarcation between them become more definite.

In the mental body of an *intuitional* man there is much more of blue, but the colours are generally vague and the whole body is ill regulated. He suffers much more than the steadier type, but sometimes through that suffering he is able to make rapid progress.

In the perfect man, of course, both the glow and enthusiasm, and the steadfastness, and regularity, have their place; it is merely a question which is required first.

In addition to the qualities enumerated above, which are expressed as colours in the mental body, there are a number of other qualities –such as courage, dignity, cheerfulness, truthfulness, and the like—which are represented broadly speaking rather by form than by colour. They are indicated by differences in the structure of the mental body, or by changes in

its surface.

Within the different rings or zones of colour described above there are usually to be seen more or less clearly marked striations, and many qualities of the man can be judged by an examination of these striations.

The possession of a *strong will*, for example, brings the whole mental body into far more level definite lines. All striations and radiations are steady, firm and clearly distinguishable, whereas in the case of a weak and vacillating person this firmness and strength of line would be consequently absent; the lines separating the different qualities would be indeterminate, and the striations would be small, weak and wavy.

Courage is shown by firm and very strongly-marked lines, especially in the orange band connected with pride, and by the calm, steadfast shining of the colours indicating the higher qualities.

When *fear* over powers a person all the colours are dimmed and overwhelmed by a livid grey mist, and the striations are lost in a quivering mass of palpitating jelly, the man having for the time, lost the power of guiding and controlling his vehicles.

Dignity also expresses itself principally in the same part of the mental body as that expressing courage, but by a calm steadiness and assuredness which is quite different from the lines of courage.

Truthfulness and accuracy are portrayed very clearly by regularity in the striations of the part of the mental body devoted to concrete forms, and by the clearness and correctness of the images which appear there.

Loyalty shows itself by an intensification both of affection and devotion, and by the constant formation in that part of the ovoid, of figures of the person to whom the loyalty is felt. In many cases of loyalty, affection and devotion, there is made a very strong permanent image of the object of those feelings, and that remains floating in the aura of the thinker, so that, when his thought turns towards the loved or adored one, the force which he pours out strengthens that already existing image, instead of forming a new one, as it would normally do.

Joy shows itself in a general brightening and radiancy of both the mental and the astral bodies, as also in a peculiar rippling of the surface of the body.

Generally Cheerfulness shows itself in a modified bubbling form of this, and also in a steady serenity which is pleasant to see.

Surprise, on the other hand, is shown by a sharp constriction of the mental body accompanied

by an increased glow in the bands of affection if the surprise is a pleasant one, and by a change of colour usually involving the display of a good deal of brown and grey in the lower part of the ovoid when the surprise is an unpleasant one. This constriction is usually communicated to both the astral and the physical bodies, and often causes singularly unpleasant feelings which affect sometimes the solar plexus [resulting in sinking and sickness] and sometimes the heart-centre, in which case it brings palpitation or even death.; so that a sudden surprise may occasionally kill one who has a weak heart.

Awe is the same as wonder, except that it is accompanied by a profound change in the devotional part of the mental body, which usually swells out under this influence and has its striations more strongly marked.

Mystical Thought and the presence of psychic faculties are indicated by colours of which there are no equivalents on the physical plane.

When a man uses any part of his mental body, directing his thought strongly into one or more of the channels previously mentioned, the mental body not only vibrates for the time more rapidly, thereby brightening in colour, but the portion of it which corresponds to that thought usually swells out temporarily and increases in size, so disturbing for a time the symmetry of the ovoid.

In many people such bulging is permanent, and that always means that the amount of thought of that type is steadily increasing. If, for example, a person takes up some scientific study, and therefore suddenly turns his thoughts in that direction much more than before, the first effect will be such protuberance as has been described. But if he keeps the amount of his thoughts on scientific subjects at the same level which he has now adopted, the protruding portion will gradually sink back into the general outline of the ovoid, but the band of its colour will have become wider than before.

If however, the man's interest in scientific subjects steadily increases in force, the protrusion will still remain in evidence even though the band has widened.

Injury may thus be done to the mental body by over-specialisation leading to a lop-sided development. It becomes over developed in some parts, and proportionately undeveloped in other regions, perhaps equally important. Harmonious and proportionate all-round development is the object to be sought, and for this is needed a calm self-analysis and a definite direction of means to ends; this aspect of our subject we shall consider further in a later chapter.

Reference has already been made to the ceaseless motion of the matter in the mental body. The same phenomenon occurs also in the case of the astral body. When for example, the astral body is disturbed by a sudden emotion all the matter is swept about as if by a

violent hurricane, so that for the time being the colours become very much mixed. Presently, however, by the specific gravity of the different types of matter the whole arrangement will sort itself once more into its usual zones. Even then the matter is by no means at rest as the particles are all the time running round these zones, though comparatively rarely leaving their own belt and intruding on another. This movement within its own zone is entirely healthy ; in fact, one in whom there is no circulation is a mental crustacean, incapable of growth until it bursts its shell. The activity of the matter in any particular zone increases in proportion to the amount of thought devoted to the subject of which it is an expression.

Disturbances of the mental body are similar to those in the astral body and are equally disastrous in their effects. Thus, if a man allows himself to be greatly worried over some problem and turns it over and over again in his mind without reaching any conclusion, he sets up a sort of storm in his mental body; perhaps an even better description would be a sore place in the mental body, like an irritation produced by friction .

An argumentative person has his mental body in a state of perpetual inflammation, and the inflammation is liable, on slight provocation, to break out at any moment into an actual sore. For such a one there is no hope of any kind of occult progress until he has brought balance and common sense to bear on his diseased condition.

If a man should permit his thought upon any given subject to stagnate, that stagnation will be reproduced in the matter appropriate to the subject. In this manner, by allowing his thought on that subject to set and solidify, a congestion is set up which appears as a prejudice. A small eddy is formed in which the mental matter runs round and round until it coagulates and becomes a kind of wart. Unless and until this wart is worn away, or forcibly rooted out, the man cannot use that particular part of his mental body, and is incapable of rational thought on that subject. The foul thickened mass blocks all free movement either outward or inward; it prevents him, on the one hand from seeing accurately, and from receiving any reliable new impressions on the matter in question, and on the other, from sending out any clear thought with regard to it.

These diseased spots in the mental body are, unfortunately, also centres of infection; the inability to see clearly therefore increases and spreads. Stagnation in one part of the mental body is thus likely to lead to stagnation in other parts also. So that if a man has a prejudice on one subject he will probably soon develop prejudices on others, because the healthy flow of mental matter has been checked, and the habit of untruth has been formed.

Religious prejudice is the commonest and the most serious of all, and completely prevents any approach to rational thought with regard to the subject. A very large number of people have the whole of that part of the mental body which should be occupied with religious matters inactive, ossified and covered with warts, so that even the most rudimentary conception of what religion really is remains utterly impossible for them until a catastrophic change has taken

place.

In general, we may repeat that in all the best of men of the more advanced races at the present day, the physical body is fully developed, and fairly under control; the astral body is also fully developed, but not by any means under perfect control; the mental body is in process of evolution, but its growth is as yet very far from complete. They have a long way to go before these three bodies are entirely subordinate to the soul. When that happens the lower self will have been absorbed into the higher self, and the ego, or soul, will have dominated the man. In such a man there is no longer conflict between his various bodies; though he is not yet perfect, yet his different vehicles are so far harmonised that they have but one aim.

CHAPTER VI

KAMA-MANAS [DESIRE MIND]

In the *Astral Body*, p. 23/5, we considered Kama, or desire, and on pp.26-9, we dealt with Kama-Manas, or the entanglement of desire and mind. In the present book we must again deal with Kama-Manas, taking for granted much of what was said in the *Astral Body* regarding Kama, and confining ourselves mainly to the Manas aspect of the subject.

Recapitulating briefly what was said in *The Astral Body*, Kama is the life manifesting in the astral vehicle; its characteristic attribute is that of feeling; it comprises animal appetites, passions and desires; it is the “ape and tiger” in us which most avails to bind us to earth. Kama or Desire is also the reflected, lower aspect of Atma or Will.

Kama is sometimes used in too limited a sense, to imply nothing but gross sensual desire; it means, however, all desire; and desire is the outward-turned aspect of love, the love of the things of the three worlds, love proper being love of life or love of the divine, and belonging to the higher or inward-turning self.

In the *Rig Veda* [x. 129] Kama is the personification of that feeling which leads and propels to creation. It is essentially the longing for active sentient existence, existence of vivid sensation, the tossing turbulence of passionate life. Thus for the individual as for the Kosmos, Kama becomes the primary cause of reincarnation and, as Desire differentiates into desire, these chain down the Thinker to earth and bring him back, time after time to rebirth.

In the East, this thirst or desire that forces man into incarnation, is known as Trishna, in Pali, Tanha; the realisation or consummation of Trishna is known as Upadana.

Manas comes from the Sanskrit word man, the root of the verb to think: it is the Thinker in us, spoken of vaguely in the West as mind. Manas is the immortal individual, the real “I”.

Manas, the Thinker, however, himself a spiritual entity living on the higher mental or causal plane, cannot come into direct contact with the lower worlds; he therefore projects from himself the lower manas, which is variously called a reflection, a shadow, a ray, etc.

It is this Ray that plays on and in the brain, manifesting through the brain such mental powers as that brain, by its configuration and other physical qualities, is able to translate. The Ray sets in vibration the molecules of the brain nerve-cells and so gives rise to consciousness on the physical plane.

This lower manas is engulfed in the quaternary, which consists of:-

Kama, or desire
Prana or Vitality
Etheric Double
Physical Body.

It may be regarded as clasping kama with one hand, whilst with the other it retains its hold on its father, higher manas.

During earth life, kama and lower manas are joined together, and are often spoken of as Kama-Manas. Kama supplies, as we have seen, the animal and passional elements; lower manas rationalises these, and adds the intellectual faculties. The two together, Kama-Manas, are so closely interwoven during life that they rarely act separately, for there is scarcely a thought which is uninfluenced by desire; Kama Manas is not a new principle, but the interweaving of the lower part of manas with Kama. Kama-Manas, that is manas with desire, has been well described as manas taking an interest in external things.

The workings of lower manas in man shows themselves as mental ability, intellectual strength, acuteness, subtlety; they comprise comparison, reason, judgement, imagination, and other mental faculties. These may reach us as far as what is often called genius, but what H. P. Blavatsky called “artificial genius”, the outcome of culture and of purely intellectual acuteness.

What we ordinarily call the mind or intellect is, in H.P. Blavatsky’s words, “a pale and too often distorted reflection of manas itself.” Its true nature is often demonstrated by the presence of kamic elements in it, such as passion, vanity, arrogance.

True genius consists of flashes of higher manas penetrating into the lower consciousness. As is said in the *Bindopanishat*: “Manas verily is declared to be twofold, pure and impure; the impure is determined by desire, the pure is desire-free.”

Genius, which sees instead of arguing, is thus of the higher manas, or ego; true intuition is one of its faculties. Reason, the weighing and balancing process which arranges the facts gathered

by observation, balances them one against another, argues from them, draws conclusions from them-this is the exercise of the lower manas through the brain apparatus; its instrument is ratiocination; by induction it ascends from the known to the unknown, building up by a hypothesis; by deduction it descends again to the known, verifying the hypothesis by fresh experiment.

There is a difference also in the mechanism of ordinary reasoning, and of the peculiar flashes of consciousness known as genius. Reasoning comes to the brain through the successive sub-planes of the astral and mental planes step by step; but genius results from the consciousness pouring downwards through the atomic sub-planes only, *i.e.*, from the atomic astral and the atomic physical.

Reason, the faculty of the physical brain, being wholly dependent on the evidence of the senses, cannot be the quality pertaining directly to the divine spirit in man. The latter *knows* - hence all reasoning, which implies discussion and argument, is useless to it. The spirit or ego, speaks through the conscience, which is the instantaneous perception between right and wrong. Hence prophesy and vaticination, and the so-called divine inspiration are simply the effects of the illumination from above by a man's own immortal spirit. [This aspect of our subject will be further considered in Chapter XXXI].

Kama-Manas, is the personal self of man; in Isis Unveiled it is termed the "astral soul" it is lower manas that gives the individualising touch that makes the personality recognise itself as "I". It becomes intellectual, it recognises itself as separate from all other selves; deluded by the separateness it feels, it does not realise a unity beyond all that it is able to sense.

Lower manas, swayed by the rush of kamic emotions, passions and desires, attracted by all material things, blinded and deafened by the storm-voices among which it is plunged, is apt to forget the pure and serene glory of its birthplace, and to throw itself into the turbulence which gives rapture but not peace. It is lower manas which gives the last touch of delight to the senses and to the animal nature; for there could be no passion without memory or anticipation, no ecstasy without the subtle force of imagination and the delicate colours of dream and fancy.

Kama thus binds lower manas fast to earth. So long as any action is undertaken with the object of obtaining love, recognition, power or fame, however grand the ambition, however far reaching the charity, however lofty the achievement-manas is tainted with kama, and is not pure at its source.

Kama and manas act and react on each other, each stimulating and arousing the other. The mind is continually impelled by desire, and is made to serve constantly as a minister of pleasure. That which gives pleasure is ever sought by the mind, and it ever seeks to present images that give pleasure and to exclude those that give pain. The mental faculties add to the animal passions a certain strength and quality not apparent in them when they work as purely

animal qualities. For the impressions made on the mental body are more permanent than those made on the astral body, and the mental body constantly reproduces them through the agency of memory and imagination. Thus the mental body stimulates the astral, arousing in it the desires that, in the animal, slumber until awakened by a physical stimulus. Hence we find in an undeveloped man a persistent pursuit of sense-gratification never found in the lower animals, a lust, a cruelty, a calculation to which they are strangers. Thus the powers of the mind, yoked to the service of the senses, make of man a far more dangerous and savage brute than any animal.

The part which is the Desire-Elemental, i.e., the instinctive life in the astral body, plays in this entanglement of manas with kama, has already been fully described in *The Astral Body*, pp. 77-8, 108-111 and 207-228, to which the student is referred.

So closely are men’s astral and mental bodies intertwined that it is often said they act as a single body. In the Vedantin classification, in fact, the two are classed together as one kosha or sheath, thus:-

Buddhic BodyAnandamayakosha
Causal Body Vignanamayakosha

Mental Body}

Astral Body }..... Manomayakosha

Etheric Double]

Dense Body]Annamayakosha

The student will recollect that the centres of sensation are situated in kama; hence the saying in the Mundakopanishat [iii,9] that “the organ of thinking of every creature is pervaded by the senses.” This emphasises the double action of the Manomayakosha, which is the organ of thinking, but is also “pervaded by the senses”.

We may note here the connection between kama-manas and the spirillae of atoms. In the First Round of the Earth-Chain the first set of spirillae of the physical plane atoms were vivified by the life of the Monad; this set is used by the currents of prana [Vitality] affecting the dense physical body.

In the Second Round, the second set of spirillae become active, the prana connected with the etheric double flowing through them.

In the Third Round the third set of spirillae is vivified, the prana connected to the astral body

flowing through them, thus making sensibility possible.

In the Fourth Round, the fourth set of spirillae becomes active, the kama-manasic prana flowing through them, thus making them fit to be used for a brain which is to act as the instrument for thought.

The vivification of further sets of spirillae for the use of the higher consciousness, in the case of those preparing for entering the Path, can be brought about by certain Yoga practices.

In the ordinary course of evolution, a new set of spirillae will be developed in each Round, so that in the Seventh Round the entire seven spirillae will be active. Hence the people who live in that Round will find it far easier than people do to-day to respond to inner things and to live the higher life.

In the course of each incarnation, manas may do one of three things: -[1] it may rise towards its source and by unremitting and strenuous effort become one with its "Father in heaven", i. e., higher manas; [2] it may partially aspire and partially tend downwards, as indeed is mostly the case with the average man; [3] it may become so clogged with kamic elements as to become one with them, and be forcibly wrenched away from its parent and perish.

Whenever lower manas can, for the time being, disconnect itself from kama, it becomes the guide of the highest mental faculties, and is the organ of freewill in physical man. The condition of this freedom is that kama shall be subdued and conquered.

Freewill resides in manas itself; from manas comes the feeling of liberty, the knowledge that we can rule ourselves, that the higher nature can rule the lower, however much that lower nature may rebel and struggle. As soon as the consciousness identifies itself with manas instead of kama, the lower nature becomes the animal which the higher consciousness can bestride, which is no longer the "I".

Thus the difference between a strong-willed and weak-willed person is that the weak-willed person is moved from outside by outer attractions and repulsions, by desire, which is "Will discrowned", while the strong-willed man is moved from inside by pure Will, continually mastering external circumstances by bringing to bear upon them appropriate forces, guided by his store of experiences.

Further, as lower manas frees itself from kama it becomes more and more capable of transmitting to the lower consciousness impulses received from higher manas, and then as we have seen, genius flashes forth, the light from the ego streaming through lower manas into the brain. Of this we may be sure: so long as we are in the vortex of the personality, so long as the storms and desires and appetites surge around us, so long as we are tossed to and fro on waves of emotion –so long the voice of the higher manas or ego cannot reach our ears. The

mandate of the ego comes not in the fire or the whirlwind, not in the thunderclap or the storm, but only when there has fallen the stillness of a silence that can be felt, only when the very air is motionless and the calm is profound, only when the man wraps his face in a mantle which closes his ear even to the silence that is of the earth, then only sounds the voice that is stiller than silence, the voice of his true higher self, or ego.

As an unruffled lake mirrors the moon and stars, but, when ruffled by a passing breeze yields only broken reflections, so may a man, steadying his mind, calming his desires, imposing stillness on his activities, reproduce within himself the image of the higher. Even so may the disciple mirror the mind of his Master. But if his own thoughts spring up, his own desires arise, he will have broken reflections, dancing lights, that tell him nothing.

In the words of a Master “ *It is upon the serene and placid surface of the unruffled mind that the visions gathered from the invisible find a representation in the visible world. It is with jealous care we have to guard our mind-plane from all the adverse influences which daily arise in our passage through earth life.*”

The ego, as part of the Universal Mind, is unconditionally omniscient on its own plane, but only potentially so in the lower worlds because it has to work through the medium of the personal self. The causal body is the vehicle of all knowledge, past, present and future, and it is from this fountain-head that its double, lower manas, catches occasional glimpses of that which is beyond the senses of man, and transmits them to certain brain-cells, thus making the man a seer, a soothsayer and a prophet.

This triumph can be gained only by many successive incarnations, all consciously directed towards this end. As life succeeds life, the physical body becomes more and more delicately attuned to the vibrations of the manasic impulses, so that the lower manas needs less and less of the coarser astral matter as its vehicle. It is part of the mission of the manasic “ray”. I.e., lower manas, gradually to get rid of “blind deceptive element” [kama] which brings it so closely into contact with matter as entirely to becloud its divine nature and stultify its intuitions.

When at last the mastery of kama is achieved, and the body is responsive to manas, lower manas becomes one with its source, higher manas; this in Christian terminology, is the “Father in Heaven” becoming one with the “Son” on all planes, as they always have been one in “heaven”. This of course, is a very advanced stage, being that of an Adept, for Whom incarnation is no longer necessary though it may be voluntarily undertaken.

Hence that great statement in the Mundakopanishat: “The organ of thinking is pervaded by the senses; that organ purified, Atma manifests Itself.”

With most people, lower manas, partially aspires and partially tends downwards. The normal experience of the average man is that life is a battlefield, manas continually wrestling with

kama; sometimes aspiration conquers, the chains of sense are broken, and lower manas soars upwards; at other times kama wins and chains lower manas down to earth.

It thus appears, as was briefly indicated in Chapter IV, that for most people the centre of consciousness is embedded in kama-manas. But the more cultured and developed are beginning to govern desire by reason, i.e., the centre of consciousness is gradually transferring itself from the higher astral to the lower mental. As men progress it will move further up still, men being dominated by principle, rather than by interest and desire.

For, ultimately, man's intellect demands that his surroundings, both of life and matter, shall be intelligible; his mind demands order, rationality, logical explanation. It cannot live in a chaos without suffering; it must know and understand, if it is to exist in peace.

In extreme cases lower manas becomes entangled so inextricably with kama that the slender link which unites the higher to the lower manas, the "silver thread that binds it to the Master," snaps in two.

Then, even during earth life, the higher nature being severed wholly from the lower, the human being is rent in twain, the brute has broken free, and it goes forth unbridled, carrying with it the reflections of manas, which should have been its guide through life. Such a being, human in form but brute in nature, may now and then be met with in the haunts of men, putrescent while still living, a thing to shudder at, even though with pity.

After physical death such an astral body is an entity of terrible potency, and is known as an Elementary, a description of it being in *The Astral Body*, pp. 144-45.

From the point of view of the ego there has been no harvest of useful experience from that personality; the "ray" has brought nothing back, the lower life has been a total and complete failure.

In [The Voice of The Silence](#) is contained the following injunction: "Let not thy "heaven born", merged in the sea of Maya, break from the universal Parent [Soul] but let the fiery power retire into the inmost chamber of the heart, and the abode of the world's Mother." The "heaven born" is chitta, the lower mind. It is born from the soul above, when manas becomes dual in incarnation. The planes of Atma-Buddhi- Manas are typified by heaven, while those of the personality are spoken of as earth.

It is the presence in man of the "heaven born" that confers on him some freedom, and because he has this liberty and power to go his own way his life is usually more disorderly, less regulated, than that of the lower kingdoms of external nature.

Even with most people some of their mental matter has become so entangled with their astral

matter that it is impossible for it to be entirely freed after death. The result of the struggle between their kama and their manas, therefore is that some portion of the mental matter, and even of causal [higher mental matter] is retained in the astral body after the ego has completely broken away from it.

If, on the other hand, a man has during life completely conquered his lower desires and succeeded in completely freeing the lower mind from desire, there is practically no struggle, and the ego is able to withdraw not only all that he “invested” in that particular incarnation, but also all the “interest”, i.e., the experiences, faculties, etc. that have been acquired.

CHAPTER VII

THOUGHT WAVES

When a man uses his mental body, i.e., when he thinks, a vibration is set up in the mental body, and this vibration produces two distinct results. The first result is that of radiating vibrations or waves; these we shall deal with in the present chapter, reserving the second result –the production of thought-forms –for a later chapter.

A vibration in the mental body, like all other vibrations, tends to communicate itself to any surrounding matter which is capable of receiving it precisely as the vibration of a bell communicates itself to the surrounding air. Hence, since the atmosphere is filled with mental matter, which responds very readily to such impulses, there is produced a sort of ripple, a kind of vibrating shell, formed in the matter of the plane, which spreads out through circumambient space exactly as the dropping of a stone into a pond produces ripples which radiate from the centre of impact over the surface of the water in every direction.

In the case of a mental impulse the radiation is not in one plane only but in many dimensions, more like the radiations from the sun or from a lamp.

The rays thrown out cross in all directions without interfering with one another in the slightest degree, just as do rays of light on the physical plane.

Moreover, the expanding sphere of vibrations is many-coloured and opalescent, but its colours grow fainter as it spreads away.

As already said, the mental vibration also tends to reproduce itself wherever opportunity is offered to it. Consequently, whenever the thought-wave strikes upon another mental body it will tend to set up in it vibrations similar to those which gave it birth in the first instance. That is to say, when a man’s mental body is struck by a thought-wave there arises a tendency in his mind to produce a thought similar to that which had previously arisen in the mind of the originator of the wave.

The thought-wave becomes less powerful in proportion to the distance from its source, though it is probable that the variation is proportional to the cube of the distance instead of to the square, because of the additional dimension involved.

Nevertheless, these mental vibrations lose their power very much more gradually than those in physical matter and seem to be exhausted, or at least to become so faint as to be imperceptible, only at an enormous distance from their source.

The distance to which a thought-wave penetrates, the strength and persistence with which it impinges upon the mental bodies of others, depend upon the strength and clearness of the original thought. Thus a strong thought will carry further than a weak and undecided one, but clearness and definiteness are of even greater importance than strength.

Other factors affecting the distance to which a thought-wave may radiate are its nature and the opposition with which it meets. Thus waves in the lower types of astral matter are usually soon deflected or overwhelmed by a multitude of other vibrations at the same level, just as in the midst of the roar of a city a soft sound is entirely drowned.

For this reason the ordinary self-centred thought of the average man, which begins on the lowest of mental levels, and instantly plunges down to correspondingly low levels of the astral, is comparatively ineffective. Its power in both the worlds is limited because, however violent it may be, there is such an immense sea of similar thought surging all around that its waves are inevitably lost and overpowered in the confusion.

A thought generated at a higher level, on the other hand, as a much clearer field for its action, because at the present time the number of thoughts producing such waves is very small. In fact, Theosophical thought is almost a class by itself from this point of view.

There are, of course, other religious people whose thoughts are quite elevated, but never so precise and definite. Even scientific thought is scarcely ever in the same class as Theosophical thought, so that there is practically a clear field for Theosophical thought in the mental world.

Theosophical thought is like a sound in a vast silence; it sets in motion a level of mental matter which is as yet but rarely used, the radiations which it causes impinging upon the mental body of the average man at a point where it is quite dormant. Hence it tends to awaken an entirely new part of the thinking apparatus.

Such a wave does not, of course necessarily convey Theosophical thought to those who are ignorant of it; but in awakening the higher portion of the mental body it tends to elevate and liberalise the man's thought as a whole, along whatever lines it may be in the habit of moving.

There is, of course, an infinite variety of thoughts; if the thought is perfectly simple there will be in the mental body only the one rate of vibration, and consequently only one type of mental matter will be strongly affected. The mental body, as we have seen, consists of matter of the four lower sub-planes of the mental plane, and in each of these sub-planes there are many sub-divisions of varying densities.

If a man is already deeply engrossed in some other line of thought, a strong wave of thought may sweep past him without affecting him, precisely as a man already occupied in business or pleasure may not hear the voice of another speaker.

As, however, large numbers of men do not think definitely or strongly except when in immediate prosecution of some business which demands their whole attention, they are likely at other times to be considerably affected by the thoughts which impinge upon them. Hence great responsibility rests upon everyone who thinks, because his thoughts, especially if strong and clear, will inevitably affect large numbers of other people.

It is not too much to say that one who harbours impure or evil thoughts thereby spreads moral contagion among his fellow men. Bearing in mind that large numbers of people have within them latent germs of evil, germs which may never bear fruit unless some force from without plays upon them and stirs them into activity, the thought-wave sent out by an impure or unholy thought may be the very factor which awakens a germ into activity and causes it to begin to grow. Hence such a thought may start some soul upon a downward career. This man may in a similar manner affect many others, and so the evil spreads and ramifies in countless directions. Much harm is constantly done in this way; and although it may be done unconsciously, yet the perpetrator of the evil is karmically responsible for what he has done.

It is of course equally true, that a beneficent thought may affect others for good in a similar manner. Hence a man who realises this may set himself to work to be a veritable sun, constantly radiating upon all his friends and neighbours thoughts of love, calm, peace etc. Very few realise how great a force for good they may thus wield, if they choose, through the power of thought.

It often happens that a man is unable to help another man physically; in fact, the physical presence of the would be helper may be even distasteful to the sufferer; his physical brain may be closed to suggestions by prejudice or by religious bigotry. But his astral and mental bodies are far more easily impressible than the physical, and it is always possible to approach these by a wave, of helpful thought, affection, soothing feeling, and so on.

There are many cases where the best will in the world can do nothing physically; but there is no conceivable case in which either in the mental or astral world some relief cannot be given by steady, concentrated, loving thought.

It should be noted that a thought-wave does not convey a definite complete idea, but rather tends to produce a thought of the same character as itself. Thus, for example, if the thought be one of devotion, its vibrations will excite devotion; but the object of the worship may be different in the case of each person upon whose mental body the thought-wave impinges.

A thought –wave or vibration thus conveys the *character* of the thought, but not its *subject*. If a Hindu sits wrapped in devotion to Krishna, the thought-waves which pour forth from him stimulate devotion in all those who come under their influence, though in the case of a Muslim, that devotion to Allah, while for the Zoroastrian it is to Ahuramazda, or for the Christian to Jesus.

If such a thought-wave touches the mental body of a materialist, to whom the very idea of devotion in any form is unknown, even then it produces an elevating effect, its tendency being to stir a higher part of his mental body into some sort of activity, though it cannot create a type of undulation to which the man is wholly unaccustomed.

A point of great importance, of which the student should take careful note, is that a man who habitually thinks pure, good and strong thoughts is utilising for that purpose the higher part of his mental body, a part which is not used at all by the ordinary man, and is entirely undeveloped in him. Such a one is, therefore, a power for good in the world, and is being of great use to all those of his neighbours who are capable of any sort of response. For the vibrations which he sends out tend to arouse a new and higher part of their mental bodies, and consequently to open before them altogether new fields of thought.

We may take the matter a little further still. A man who day by day is definitely and carefully thinking is not only improving his own thinking powers and sending out helpful thought-waves into the world around him, but he is also developing and improving mental matter itself. For the amount of consciousness which can be brought into the brain is obviously determined by the degree to which the atoms of matter can respond, i.e., to the number of spirillae in the atoms which are vivified and active. Normally, in the ordinary physical atom at the present stage of evolution, there are four of these seven spirillae active. The man who is capable of higher forms of thought is helping to develop further spirillae in the atoms, and, as these atoms are continually passing in and out of his bodies, they are available for absorption and use by any other person who is capable of using them. High thinking thus helps the world's consciousness by improving the very materials of thought.

There are thus many varieties of mental matter, and it is found that each variety has its own special and appropriate rate of vibration, to which it is most accustomed and to which it most readily responds. A complex thought may, of course, affect many varieties of mental matter simultaneously.

The general principle, underlying the effect of thought on the mental body [and also that of

feeling on the astral body] as we saw in Chapter III, is that evil or selfish thoughts are always comparatively slow vibrations of the coarser matter, while good, unselfish thoughts are the more rapid undulations which play only in the finer matter.

The power of the united thought of a number of people is always far greater than the sum of their separate thoughts; it would be much more nearly represented by their product. Hence, it is exceedingly beneficial for any city or community that there should be constantly meeting in its midst a number of people who are capable of generating thoughts at a high level.

CHAPTER VIII

THOUGHT FORMS

We come now to consider the second effect produced when a man uses his mental body in thinking, viz., the formation of thought forms.

As we have seen, a thought gives rise to a set of vibrations in the matter of the mental body. Under this impulse the mental body throws off a vibrating portion of itself shaped by the nature of the vibrations, much in the way that fine particles laid on a disc are thrown into a form when the disc is made to vibrate to a musical note.

The mental matter thus thrown off gathers from the surrounding atmosphere elemental essence of the mental world [i.e., of the Second Elemental Kingdom] of the appropriate type, and sets that essence into vibration in harmony with its own rate.

Thus is generated a thought form pure and simple. Such a mental thought-form resembles an astral or emotional form [described in *The Astral Body*], but it is far more radiant and more brilliantly coloured, is stronger and more lasting, and more fully vitalised.

A graphic description of the effect of thought is as follows. "These [mental] vibrations, which shape the matter of the plane into thought-forms, give rise –from their swiftness and subtlety – to the most exquisite and constantly changing colours, waves of varying shades like the rainbow hues in mother-of- pearl, etherialised and brightened to an indescribable extent, sweeping over and through every form so that each presents a harmony of rippling, living, luminous, delicate colours, including many not even known on earth. Words can give no idea of the exquisite beauty and radiance shown in combinations of this subtle matter, instinct with life and motion. Every seer has witnessed it, Hindu, Buddhist, Christian, speaks in rapturous terms of its glorious beauty and ever confesses his utter inability to describe it; words seem but to coarsen and deprave it however deftly the praise."

A thought form is a temporary living entity of intense activity animated by the one idea that generated it. If made of the finer kinds of matter, it will be of great power and energy, and may

be used as a most potent agency when directed by a strong and steady will. Into the details of such use we shall enter later.

The elemental essence is a strange semi-intelligent life which surrounds us, vivifying matter of the mental plane. It responds readily to the influence of human thought so that every impulse sent out from the mental body of a man immediately clothes itself in a temporary vehicle of this essence. It is, in fact, even more instantaneously sensitive, if that be possible, to the action of thought than is astral elemental essence.

But mental elemental essence differs greatly from astral elemental essence; it is a whole chain behind the other, and, therefore, the force in it cannot work quite in the same concentrated way. It is trying to deal with, for it is largely responsible for our wandering thoughts, as it darts constantly from one thing to another.

A thought, then, as stated, becomes for the time a kind of living creature; the thought-force is the soul, the elemental essence the body. These thought-forms are called elementals, or sometimes artificial elementals.

The principles underlying the production of all thought-forms are:-

- [1] Quality of thought determines colour
- [2] Nature of thought determines form
- [3] Definiteness of thought determines clearness of outline.

Thought-forms may be of infinite variety, both as to colour and shape. With the various colours and their significance the student will now be familiar, as they are in agreement with those existing in the astral and mental bodies as described in The Astral Body and also in an earlier chapter of this book.

Thus for example, affection produces a glowing rose-colour; a wish to heal, a lovely silvery-white; a mental effort to steady and strengthen the mind, a beautiful flashing golden-yellow.

Yellow in any of the vehicles always indicates intellect, but its shades vary much, and it may be complicated by the admixture of other colours.

Generally speaking, it has a deeper and duller tint if it is directed to the lower channels, more especially if the objects are selfish.

In the astral or mental body of an average man of business it would show itself as yellow ochre, while pure intellect devoted to the study of philosophy or mathematics appears frequently as golden; this rises gradually to a beautiful clear and luminous primrose-yellow when a powerful intellect is employed absolutely unselfishly for the benefit of humanity.

Most yellow thought-forms are clearly outlined, a vague cloud of yellow being comparatively rare. It indicates intellectual pleasure such as appreciation of the result of ingenuity, or the delight in clever craftsmanship.

A cloud of this nature betokens the entire absence of any personal emotion, for if that were present it would inevitably tinge the yellow with its appropriate colour.

In many cases, thought-forms are merely revolving clouds of the colour appropriate to the idea which gave them birth. The student will realise that, at the present stage of humanity, there is a vast preponderance of cloudy and irregularly-shaped thoughts, the product of ill-trained minds of the majority. It is among the rarest of phenomena to see clear and definite forms among the thousands that float about us.

Where a thought is definite a form is created, and a clear-cut and often beautiful shape is assumed. Such shapes while of infinite variety, are often in some way typical of the kind of thought which they express. Abstract ideas usually represent themselves by all kinds of perfect and most beautiful geometrical forms. It should be remembered in this connection that the merest abstractions to us down here become definite facts, on the mental plane.

The strength of thought and emotion determines the size of the thought-form as well as its duration as a separate entity. Its duration depends upon the nutriment supplied to it after its generation by the repetition of the thought either by its originator or by others.

If the thought be intellectual and impersonal –eg. If the thinker is attempting to solve a problem in algebra or geometry –then his thought-forms [as well as his thought waves] will be confined to the mental plane.

If his thought is of a spiritual nature, eg., if it be tinged with love and aspiration of deep, unselfish feeling, then it will rise upwards from the mental plane and will borrow much of the splendour and glory of the buddhic levels above. In such a case its influence is most powerful and every such thought is a mighty force for good.

If, on the other hand, the thought has in it something of self or personal desire, at once its vibrations turn downwards, and it draws round itself a body of astral matter in addition to its clothing of mental matter. Such a thought-form –which would be termed more accurately a thought – emotion –form –is, of course, capable of affecting both the mental and the astral bodies of other men.

This type of thought-form is by far the most common, as few thoughts of ordinary men and women are untinged with desire, passion, or emotion.

We may consider this class of thought-forms as generated by the activity of kama-manas, i.e., by mind dominated by desire.

When a man thinks of any concrete object—a book, a house, a landscape—he builds a tiny image of the object in the matter of his mental body. This image floats in the upper part of that body, usually in front of the face of the man and at about the level of the eye. It remains there as long as the man is contemplating the object, and usually for a little time afterwards, the length of time depending upon the intensity and the clearness of thought. This form is quite objective and can be seen by another person possessed of mental clairvoyance. If a man thinks of another person he creates a tiny portrait in just the same way.

The same result follows any effort of the “imagination”. The painter who forms a conception of his future picture builds it up out of the matter of his mental body, and then projects it into space in front of him, keeps it before his mind’s eye, and copies it. The novelist, in the same way, builds images of his characters in mental matter, and by the exercise of his will moves these puppets from one position or grouping to another, so that the plot of the story is literally acted out before him.

As already said, these mental images are so entirely objective that they may not only be seen by a clairvoyant, but they can even be moved about and re-arranged by some one other than their creator. Thus for example, playful nature spirits [vide., *The Astral Body*, p. 53], or more often a “dead” novelist, watching the work of his fellow-author, will move the images or puppets about so that they seem to their creator to have developed a will of their own, the plot of the story thus working out on lines quite different from those originally intended by the author.

A sculptor makes a strong thought-form of the statue he intends to create, plants it in his block of marble, and then proceeds to cut away the marble which lies outside the thought-form until only that portion of it which it interpenetrated by the thought-form remains.

Similarly, a lecturer, as he thinks earnestly of the different parts of his subject, makes a series of thought-forms, usually strong ones, because of the effort. If he fails to make his audience understand him it must be largely because his own thought is not sufficiently clear cut. A clumsy and indefinite thought-form makes but a slight impression, and even that with difficulty, whilst a clearly-cut one forces the mental bodies of the audience to try to reproduce it.

Hypnotism provides examples of the objectivity of thought-forms. It is well known that the thought-form of an idea may be projected onto a blank paper, and there become visible to a hypnotised person. Or it may be made so objective that the hypnotised person will see and feel it as though it were an actual physical object.

Many thought-forms exist, more or less permanently, of characters from history, drama, fiction, etc. Thus for example, popular fancy has strongly depicted characters and scenes from the

plays of Shakespeare, from Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, from fairy stories such as Cinderella, Aladdin's Lamp, etc. Such thought-forms are collective, having coalesced from the products of the imagination of countless individuals.

Children have vivid and capable imaginations, so books read by them are usually well represented in the world of thought-forms, many excellent and life-like portraits existing of Sherlock Holmes, Captain Kettle, Dr. Nikola, and many others.

On the whole however, the thought-forms evoked from the novels of to-day are by no means as clear as those which our forefathers made of Robinson Crusoe or of the characters of Shakespeare's plays. This of course, is because people today read more superficially and with less serious attention than was the case formerly.

So much for the genesis of thought-forms. We pass now to consider their effects on their creators and on others.

Each man as he moves through life produces three classes of thought-forms:-

[1] Those which, being neither centred round the thinker nor specially aimed at any person, are left behind him as a sort of trail which marks his route.

[2] Those, which being centred round the thinker, hover round him and follow him wherever he goes.

[3] Those which shoot straight out away from the thinker, aiming at a definite object.

A thought-form of Class I, being neither definitely personal nor specially aimed at someone else, simply floats detached in the atmosphere, all the time radiating vibrations similar to those originally sent forth by its creator. If the form does not come in contact with any other mental body the radiation gradually exhausts its store of energy, and in that case the form falls to pieces.

But if it succeeds in awakening sympathetic vibrations in any mental body near at hand, an attraction is set up and the thought-form is usually absorbed by that mental body.

At the present stage of evolution the majority of the thoughts of men are usually self-centred even when they are not actively selfish. Such self-centred thoughts hang about the thinker. Most men, in fact, surround their mental bodies with a shell of such thoughts. They hover ceaselessly about them and constantly react on them. Their tendency is to reproduce themselves –i.e., to stir up in the man a repetition of the thoughts which he had previously entertained. Many a man feels this pressure upon him from within, this constant suggestion of certain thoughts, especially when he is resting after his labours, and there is no definite thought in his mind. If the thoughts are evil, he frequently thinks of them as tempting demons goading him into sin. Yet they are none the less entirely his own creation; he is his own

tempter.

Repeated thoughts of this kind play an important part in working out what is called Prarabda or “ripe” karma. Persistent reiteration of thoughts of the same kind, say of revenge, bring a man at last to a point which may be compared to that of a saturated solution. Just as the addition of further matter of the same kind to the solution will produce the solidification of the whole, so will a slight additional impulse result in the commission of a crime. Similarly, reiterated thoughts of helping others may, when the stimulus of opportunity touches the man, crystallise out as an act of heroism. Under such circumstances, a man may marvel at his own commission of a crime or at his own performance of some heroic act of self-sacrifice, not realising that repeated thought had made the action inevitable. A consideration of these facts goes far towards explaining the old problem of freewill and necessity or destiny.

Furthermore, a man’s thought-forms tend to draw towards the man the thought-forms of others of a similar nature. A man may thus attract to himself large reinforcements of energy from outside; it lies within himself, of course, whether these forces that he draws into himself be of a good or evil kind.

Usually each definite thought creates a new thought-form; but if a thought-form of the same nature is already hovering round the thinker, under certain circumstances a new thought on the same subject, instead of creating a new form, coalesces with and strengthens the old one, so that by long brooding over the same subject a man may sometimes create a thought-form of tremendous power. If the thought be an evil one, such a thought-form may become a veritable malign influence lasting perhaps for many years, and having for a time all the appearance and powers of a real living entity.

A shell of self-centred thought obviously must tend to obscure the mental vision and facilitate the formation of prejudice. Through such a shell the man looks out upon the world, naturally seeing everything tinged with its predominant colours; everything which reaches him from without is thus more or less modified by the character of the shell. Thus, until a man has complete control of thought and feeling he sees nothing as it really is, since all his observations must be made through this medium which, like a badly-made glass, distorts and colours everything.

It was for this reason that Aryasangha [now the Master Djwal Kul] said in [The Voice of the Silence](#) that the mind was “the great slayer of the real”. He was drawing attention to the fact that we do not see any object as it is, but only the images that we are able to make of it, everything being thus necessarily coloured for us by these thought-forms of our own creation.

If a man’s thought of another is merely contemplative and involves no feeling [such as affection or dislike], or desire [such as a wish to see the person] the thought does not usually perceptibly affect the man whom he thinks.

If, however, there is feeling, eg., affection, associated with the thought, the thought-form, built out of matter of the thinker's mental body, and this astro-mental form leaps out of the body in which it has been generated, goes straight towards the object of the feeling, and fastens itself upon him.

It may be compared to a Leyden jar; the form of elemental essence corresponds to the Leyden jar, and the thought energy to the charge of electricity.

If the man is at the moment in a passive condition, or if he has within him active vibrations of a character harmonious with those of the thought-form, the thought-form will at once discharge itself upon him, and in the act cease to exist. The effect is to provoke a vibration similar to its own, if none such already exists; or to intensify it if it is already to be found there.

If the man's mind is so strongly occupied along other lines that it is impossible for the vibration to find an entrance, the thought-form hovers about him waiting for an opportunity to discharge itself.

A thought-form sent from one person to another thus involves the actual transference of a certain amount both of force and of matter from the sender to the recipient.

The difference between the effect of a thought-wave and that of a thought-form is that the thought-wave as we saw in Chapter VII, does not produce a definite complete idea, but tends to produce a thought as the same character as itself; a thought-wave is thus much less definite in its action, but reaches a far wider circle.

A thought-form on the other hand, does convey a definite complete idea, transferring the exact nature of the thought to those prepared to receive it, but it can reach only one person at a time.

Thus a thought-wave is eminently adaptable; a wave of devotion, for example, would tend to arouse devotion in the recipient, although the object of the devotion might be quite different in the case of the sender and the receiver. But a thought-form would give rise to a precise image of the being for whom the devotion was originally felt.

If the thought is sufficiently strong, distance makes absolutely no difference to the thought-form, but the thought of an ordinary person is usually weak and diffused, and is, therefore, not effective outside a limited area.

A thought-form, say of love or of desire to protect, directed strongly towards another person, goes to the person thought of, and remains in his aura as a shielding and protecting agent; it will seek all opportunities to serve, and all opportunities to defend, not by a conscious and deliberate action but by a blind following out of impulse impressed upon it, and it will

strengthen friendly forces that impinge on the aura and weaken unfriendly ones. Thus are created and maintained veritable guardian angels round those we love. Many a mother's "prayer" for a distant child thus circles round him, acting in the manner described.

A knowledge of these facts should make us conscious of the enormous power placed in our hands. We may repeat here what was said when we were dealing with thought-waves, viz., that there are many cases where we may not be able to do anything for a man on the physical plane. The man's mental [and astral] bodies, however, can be affected, and they are frequently more easily impressible than his physical body. Hence it is always open to us to affect his mental or astral body by helpful thought, affectionate feeling etc. The laws of thought being what they are, it is certain that results must accrue; there is no possibility of failure, even though no obvious consequence may follow on the physical plane.

The student will readily perceive that a thought-form can affect another person only if in the aura of that person there are materials capable of responding sympathetically to the vibration of the thought-form. In cases where the vibrations of the thought-form are outside the limits within which the person's aura is capable of vibrating, the thought-form rebounds from it, and that with a force proportional to the energy with which it impinged upon it.

Hence the saying that a pure mind and heart are the best protection against inimical assaults, for a pure mind and heart will construct mental and astral bodies of fine and subtle materials, and these bodies cannot respond to vibrations that demand coarse and dense matter.

If an evil thought, projected with malefic intent, strikes such a purified body, it will rebound and fly back along the magnetic line of least resistance, returning to and striking its projector. He, having matter in his mental and astral bodies similar to that of the thought-form he generated, is thrown into respondent vibrations, and suffers the destructive effects he had intended to cause another. Thus "curses" [and blessings] come home to roost." From this arise also the very serious effects of hating or suspecting a good and highly advanced man; the thought-forms sent against him cannot injure him, and they rebound against their projectors, shattering them mentally, morally, or physically.

When a man thinks of himself as in some distant place, or wishes earnestly to be there, the thought-form, which he makes in his own image, appears in that place. Not infrequently such a form has been seen by others, and has sometimes been mistaken for the astral body or apparition of the man himself. To make this possible, either the seer must have sufficient clairvoyance for the time to be able to see the thought-form, or the thought-form must have sufficient strength to materialise itself i.e., to draw round itself temporarily a certain amount of physical matter.

The thought which generates such a form must necessarily be a strong one, and it therefore employs a large proportion of the matter of the mental body, so that though the form is small

and compressed when it leaves the thinker, it usually expands to life-size before it appears at its destination. Furthermore, a thought-form such as this, which must essentially be composed of mental matter, in very many cases will also draw round itself a considerable amount of astral matter. In taking on the astral form the mental elemental loses much of its brilliance, though its glowing colour may still be plainly visible inside the shell of lower matter which it assumes. Just as the original thought ensouls the elemental essence of the mental plane, so the same thought, plus its form as a mental elemental, acts as the soul of the astral elemental.

None of the consciousness of the thinker would be included in a thought-form such as that just described. When once sent out from him it would normally be quite a separate entity –not, indeed entirely unconnected with its creator, but practically so as far as the possibility of receiving any impression through it is concerned.

There is, however, a type of clairvoyance rather more advanced than ordinary clairvoyance, necessitating a certain amount of control upon the mental plane. It is necessary to retain so much hold over a newly created thought-form as will render it possible to receive impressions by means of it. Such impressions as were made upon the form would be transmitted to the thinker by sympathetic vibration. In a perfect case of this kind of clairvoyance it is almost as though the seer projected a part of his consciousness into the thought-form, and used it as a kind of outpost from which observation was possible. He is able to see almost as well as he would if he himself stood in the place of his thought-form. The figures at which he is looking will appear to him as of life size and close at hand and he will find it possible to shift his point of view if he wishes to do so.

Everyone who can think at all exercises the power to create thought-forms. Thoughts are things, and very puissant things; everyone of us is generating thought-forms unceasingly night and day. Our thoughts, as many might suppose, are not exclusively our own business. Evil thoughts, in fact, reach much further than evil words, and may affect any other persons who already have germs of evil in them.

As a Master has written: *“Man is continually peopling his current in space with a world of his own, crowded with the offspring of his fancies, desires, impulses and passions.”*

A Master has also written of the Adept being able: *“To project into and materialise in the visible world the forms that his imagination has constructed out of inert cosmic matter in the invisible world. The adept does not create anything new, but only utilises and manipulates materials which Nature has in store around him, and material which, throughout eternities has passed through all forms. He has but to choose the one he wants and recall it into objective existence.”*

The difference between an undeveloped and a developed man is that the developed man uses thought-power consciously. When such a man can consciously create and direct a thought-form, his powers of usefulness obviously very largely increase; for he can use the thought-form

to work in places which, at the moment he cannot conveniently visit in his mental body. He can thus watch and guide his thought-forms and make them the agents of his will.

Perhaps the supreme example of a thought-form is that known in the Christian Church as the Angel of the Presence. This is not a member of the kingdom of the Angels, but a thought-form of the Christ, wearing His likeness and being an extension of the consciousness of the Christ Himself. It is by means of the Angel of the Presence that is made the change in the “elements” known as transubstantiation.

A similar phenomenon occurs, though at a less high level, in Masonic Lodges where a portrait of the H.O.A.T.F. is used. So fully is this thought-form a part of Himself that the Lodge has the benefit of His presence and His blessing just as though He stood there in physical form.

It is possible, by an exertion of will-power, instantly to dissipate an artificial elemental, or thought-form, just as it is possible on the physical plane to kill a poisonous snake in order that it may do no further harm. Neither course of action, however, would commend itself to an occultist except in very unusual circumstances. In order to make clear the reason of this, some little explanation regarding the elemental essence is necessary.

Elemental essence, out of which a thought-form is constructed is, as we have already seen, evolving on its own account, i.e., it is learning to vibrate at all possible rates. When therefore, a thought holds it for a time vibrating at a certain rate, it is helped to this extent, so that next time a similar vibration strikes it, it will respond more readily than before.

Whether the thought ensouling it is evil or good makes no difference whatever to the essence; all that is required for its development is to be used by thought of some kind. The difference between the good and the evil in the would be shown by the quality of essence which was affected, an evil thought or desire needing for its expression the coarser matter, a higher thought or desire requiring finer matter.

Thus by degrees mental elemental essence is being evolved, through the action on it of the thoughts of men, nature spirits, devas, and even animals so far as they do think.

For this reason, therefore, i.e., lest he should in any way impede its evolution, the occultist avoids when possible the destruction of an artificial elemental, preferring rather to defend himself or others against it by using the protection of a shell.

The student should not, of course, imagine it is his duty to think coarse thoughts in order to help the evolution of the coarser types of essence. There are plenty of undeveloped people always thinking the coarser, lower thoughts; the occultist should strive ever to think high and pure thoughts and thus aid the evolution of the finer elemental matter, thus working in a field where there are as yet few labourers.

Before leaving this subject of thought-forms we should note that every sound makes its impression upon astral and mental matter –not only what we call musical sounds, but every kind of sound. Some of these were described in *The Astral Body*, Chapter VII.

The thought-form edifice built up on the higher planes during the celebration of the Christian Eucharist, differs somewhat from ordinary thought-forms, though it has much in common with forms created by music. It consists of a higher plane structure composed of the materials provided by the priest and his congregation during the earlier part of the service at the etheric, astral and mental levels, matter of still higher levels being introduced in the later portion of the service, chiefly from the Angelic host.

The thought-edifice may be compared to the condenser in a plant for the distillation of water. The steam is cooled and condensed into water in the cooling chamber. Similarly, the eucharistic edifice provides a vehicle for the collection and condensation of the materials provided by the worshippers, into which an especial outpouring of the divine force from the very highest levels may descend, and which may enable the Angel- helpers to use that force for certain definite purposes in the physical world.

The ceremonies of all great religions aim at producing such results by some sort of common action. The ceremonies of Freemasonry attain a similar object, though in a different way. The thought-form built up by a Masonic ceremony is the real “celestial canopy” which may also be regarded as the aura of a man lying on his back. This symbolism appears elsewhere as, for example, in Joseph’s coat of many colours, in the Robe of Glory which the initiate puts on, and also in the *Augoeides* [see p. 237] of the Greek Philosophers, the glorified body in which the soul of man dwells in the subtle invisible world.

CHAPTER IX

THE MECHANISM OF THOUGHT-TRANSFERENCE

Before proceeding to consider the phenomenon of thought-transference, and its effects on men, it will be convenient first to describe the mechanism by means of which thought is transmitted from one person to another.

The term telepathy means literally “feeling at a distance”, and might, therefore, have been appropriately confined to the transmission of feelings and emotions. It is however, now generally used almost synonymously with thought-transference, and may be taken to cover any transfer of an image, thought or feeling from one person to another by non-physical means.

There are three possibilities in telepathy ; there may be direct communication between:

- [1] two etheric brains
- [2] two astral bodies
- [3] two mental bodies

In the first method, which we may call the physical or etheric method, a thought causes vibrations first in the mental body then in the astral body, then in the etheric brain, and finally in the dense molecules of the physical brain. By the brain-vibrations the physical ether is affected and the waves pass outwards till they reach another brain, where they set up vibrations in its etheric and dense particles. These vibration in the receiving brain are then transmitted to the astral and mental bodies attached to it, and so reach the consciousness.

If a person thinks strongly of a concrete form in the physical brain he makes the form in etheric matter; in the effort of making the image he also sends out etheric waves in every direction. It is not the image itself which is sent out, but a set of vibrations which will reproduce the image. The process is somewhat analogous to the telephone, where the voice itself is not conveyed, but a number of electrical vibrations are set up by the voice, which when they enter the receiver, are converted once more into the sounds of the voice.

The pineal gland is the organ of thought-transference, just as the eye is the organ of vision. The pineal gland in most people is rudimentary, but it is evolving, not retrograding, and it is possible to quicken its evolution so that it can perform its proper function, the function which, in the future, it will discharge in all.

If anyone thinks very intently on a single idea, with concentration and sustained attention, he will become conscious of a slight quiver or creeping feeling –it has been compared to the creeping of an ant –in the pineal gland. The quiver takes place in the ether which permeates the gland and causes a slight magnetic current which gives rise to the creeping feeling in the dense molecules of the gland. If the thought be strong enough to cause the current, then the thinker knows that he has been successful in bringing his thought to a pointedness and a strength which render it capable of being transmitted.

The vibration in the ether of the pineal gland sets up waves in the surrounding ether like waves of light, only much smaller and more rapid. These vibrations pass out in all directions, setting the ether in motion, and these etheric waves in turn produce vibrations in the ether of the pineal gland in another brain, and from that are transmitted to the astral and mental bodies in regular succession, as previously described, thus reaching consciousness. If the second pineal gland cannot reproduce the undulations then the thought will pass unnoticed, making no impression, any more than waves of light make an impression on the eye of a blind man.

In the second, or astral method of thought-transference, the etheric brain does not enter into the process at all, the communication being direct from one astral body to another.

In the third, or mental method, the thinker, having created a thought on the mental plane, does

not send it down to the brain but directs it immediately to the mental body of another thinker. The power to do this deliberately implies a far higher mental evolution than does the physical method of thought-transference, for the sender must be self-conscious on the mental plane in order to exercise knowingly this activity. When mankind is more evolved, this will probably be the common method of communication. It is already employed by the Masters in the instruction of Their pupils, and in this way They can convey with ease the most complicated ideas.

CHAPTER X

THOUGHT TRANSFERENCE [UNCONSCIOUS]

In Chapters VII and VIII we have dealt with the generation of thought-waves and thought-forms, and, to some extent, with the effect of these on others. The latter aspect of our subject is sufficiently important to necessitate further elaboration. We will deal first with that kind of thought-transference which is either wholly or partially unconscious.

From what has already been said it is clear that every man, wherever he goes, leaves behind him a trail of thoughts. As we walk along the street, for example, we are walking all the time amidst a sea of other men's thoughts; the whole atmosphere is filled with them, vague and indeterminate.

If a man leaves his mind a blank for a time, these residual thoughts, generated by other people, drift through it, making in most cases but little impression upon it but occasionally seriously affecting it. Sometimes one arrives which attracts the man's attention so that his mind seizes upon it and makes it his own for a moment or two, strengthens it by the addition of its force, and then casts it out again to affect someone else.

A man, therefore, is not responsible for a thought which floats into his mind, because it may not be his own, but someone else's. He is responsible, however, if he takes it up, dwells upon it, and then sends it out strengthened.

Such a mixture of thoughts from many sources has no definite coherence, though any one of them may start a line of associated ideas and so set the mind thinking on its own account. Many men, if they were to examine the stream of thoughts which pass through their minds, would probably be surprised to discover how many idle and useless fancies enter and leave their minds in a short period of time. Not one fourth of these are their own thoughts. In most cases they are quite useless and their general tendency is more likely to be evil than good.

Thus men continually affect each other by their thoughts, sent out mostly without definite intent. Public opinion, in fact, is largely created in this way; for the most part public opinion is thought-transference. Most people think along certain lines not because they have carefully thought questions out for themselves, but because large numbers of others are thinking along

those lines and carry others with them. The strong thought of a powerful thinker goes out into the mental world and is caught up by receptive and responsive minds. They reproduce his vibrations, strengthen the thought, and thus help to affect others, the thoughts becoming stronger and stronger and eventually influencing large numbers of people.

If we consider these thought-forms in the mass, it is easy to realise the tremendous effect they have in producing national and race feeling, and thus in biasing and prejudicing the mind. We all grow up surrounded by an atmosphere crowded with thought-forms embodying certain ideas; national prejudices, national ways of looking at things, national types of thoughts and feelings; all these play upon us from our birth, and even before. Everything is seen through this atmosphere, every thought is more or less refracted by it, and our own mental and astral bodies are vibrating in accord with it. Nearly everyone is dominated by the national atmosphere: "public opinion", once formed, sways the minds of the great majority, beating unceasingly upon the brains and awakening in them responsive vibrations. Sleeping and waking these influences play upon us, and our very unconsciousness makes them more effective. Most people being receptive rather than initiative in their nature, they act almost as automatic reproducers of the thought which reach them, and thus the national atmosphere is continually intensified.

An inevitable result of this state of affairs is that nations receiving impressions from other nations modify them by their own vibration rates. Hence people of different nations, seeing the same facts, add to them their own existing prepossessions and quite honestly accuse each other of falsifying the facts and practising unfair methods. If this truth, and its inevitability, were recognised, many international quarrels would be smoothed more easily than now is the case, and many wars even would be avoided. Then each nation would recognise the "personal equation", and instead of blaming the other for difference of opinion, would seek the mean between the two views, neither insisting wholly on its own.

Most men never make any effort at real discrimination on their own account, being unable to shake themselves free from the influence of the great crowd of thought-forms which constitute public opinion. Hence they never really see the truth at all, nor even know of its existence, being satisfied to accept instead this gigantic thought-form. For the occultist, however, the first necessity is to attain a clear and unprejudiced view of everything; to see it as it really is, and not as a number of people suppose it to be.

To secure this clearness of vision unceasing vigilance is necessary. To detect the influence of the great hovering thought-cloud is not the same as the ability to defy its influence. Its pressure is ever present, and quite unconsciously we may find ourselves yielding to it in all sorts of minor matters, even though we keep ourselves clear from it with regard to the greater points. We were born under its pressure just as we were born under the pressure of the atmosphere, and are just as unconscious of one as of the other. The occultist imperatively must learn to free himself entirely from this influence, and to face the truth as it is, and not distorted through the medium of these gigantic, collective thought-forms.

The influence of aggregated thoughts is not confined to that which they exercise on man's subtler vehicles. Thought-forms of a destructive type act as a disruptive energy and may often work havoc on the physical plane; they are the fruitful sources of "accidents", of natural convulsions, storms, cyclones, hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, etc.

They may stir up wars, revolutions, and social disturbances and upheavals of every kind. Epidemics of disease and crime, cycles of accidents, have a similar explanation. Thought-forms of anger aid in the perpetration of murder. Thus in every direction, in endless fashions, do men's evil thoughts play havoc, reacting on themselves and others.

Turning now to the effects produced, more specifically by thoughts of individuals, the student will recollect that in *The Astral Body* we described the effects produced upon a man's astral body by, eg., a rush of devotional feeling. Such devotional *feeling* is usually accompanied also by *thoughts* of devotion; draw round themselves a large amount of astral matter as well, so that they act in both mental and astral worlds. A developed man, therefore, is a centre of devotional waves, which must inevitably influence other people born both in their thoughts and their feelings. The same of course, is true in the case of affection, anger, depression, and all other feelings.

Another typical example is that of the currents of thought flowing out from a lecturer, and other currents of comprehension and appreciation rising from the audience and joining with those from the speaker.

Often it happens that the play of the lecturer's thoughts awakens sympathetic response in the mental bodies of the audience, so that at the time they are able to understand the speaker; later, however, when the stimulus of the speaker is no longer present, they forget and find they are no longer able to comprehend what at the time seemed clear to them.

Critical thought, on the other hand, sets up a page opposing rate of vibration, breaking up the stream and throwing it into confusion. It is said that anyone who has seen this effect produced is little likely to forget the object lesson.

In reading a book a man's thoughts may attract the attention of the writer of the book, who may be in his astral body, during sleep or after physical death. The writer may thus be drawn to the student, thus causing him to be enveloped in the atmosphere of the writer quite as potently as though he were physically present.

Similarly, also the thought of the student may attract to himself the thoughts of other persons who have studied the same subject.

An excellent example of the effect on the living of the thoughts of a disembodied man occurs

where a man has been executed, say, for murder, and where he takes his revenge by instigating other murders. This is, in fact, one explanation of those cycles of murders of the same type which from time to time occur in communities.

The effect of thoughts on children is especially marked. Just as a child's physical body is plastic and easily moulded, so are his astral body and mental body. A child's mental body drinks in thoughts of others as a sponge draws up water, and though it may be too young to reproduce them now, the seed will bear fruit in due season. Hence the immense importance of a child being surrounded with a noble and unselfish atmosphere.

To a clairvoyant it is a terrible sight to see beautiful white child-souls and child-auras in a few years become soiled, smirched and darkened by the selfish, impure and unholy thoughts of the adults around them. Only the clairvoyant knows how enormously and how rapidly child-characters would improve if only adult characters were better.

Whilst it is never right to endeavour to dominate the thought and will of another, even though it may be for what seems to be a good end, it is nevertheless always right to fix the thoughts upon man's good qualities thus tending to strengthen the good characteristics. Conversely, to dwell in thought upon a man's defects or bad qualities is to strengthen the undesirable tendencies or even to produce evil qualities where these previously did not exist, or were merely latent germs.

Thus to take a simple example, suppose that a group of people who indulge in gossip and scandal accuse another of jealousy. If the victim has already a tendency towards jealousy, it is obvious that it will be greatly intensified by such a cataract of thought; whilst even if he is entirely free from jealousy those who think and talk about his imagined fault are doing their best to create in the man the very vice over the imagined presence of which they gloat so cruelly.

The injury done by gossip and scandal is almost immeasurable, and the student will recollect the strong indictment launched against these evil practices in [At the Feet of The Master](#). The form which the criticism of a true occultist will take will be that happy kind which grasps at a pearl as eagerly as much of our modern criticism pounces upon a flaw.

Thus the possibility –or rather the inevitability –of being able to affect others for good or for ill by thought-power places a tremendous instrument in the hands of all who choose to wield it.

Astro-mental images *i.e.*, thought-forms with which emotion of feeling is also associated, play no inconsiderable part in making karmic links with other people. Thus suppose, to take an extreme example, a man by sending out a thought of bitter hatred and revenge has helped to form in another the impulse which results in murder. The creator of that thought is necessarily linked by his karma to the committor of the crime even though he has never seen him on the

physical plane. Ignorance, or the absence of memory, does not cause a failure in the working of karmic law, and a man must therefore reap the results of his thoughts and feelings as well as of his physical actions.

In general, the mental images which a man makes, largely influence his future environment. In such fashion are made the ties which draw people together for good or evil in later lives; which surround us with relations, friends and enemies; which bring across our path helpers and hinderers, people who love us without our earning that love in this life, and who hate us, though in this life we have done nothing to deserve that hatred. Hence our thoughts, by their direct action on ourselves, not only produce our mental and moral character, but they also, by their effects on others, help to determine our human associates in the future.

It is, of course, possible to protect oneself to a great extent from the incursion of thought-forms from outside, by making a wall round oneself of the substance of the aura. Mental matter, as we have seen, responds very readily to the impulse of thought and may easily be moulded into any shape we will. The same things can be done with astral matter, as we saw in *The Astral Body*.

Nevertheless, to use a shell for oneself is to a certain extent a confession of weakness, the best protection of all being a radiant goodwill and purity which will sweep away everything undesirable in a mighty outpouring stream of love.

The occasions on which it may be necessary to make use of a shell for oneself are: [1] when entering a promiscuous crowd; [2] in meditation; [3] when sleep is approaching; [4] under special conditions where without its help lower thoughts would be likely to obtrude themselves. [2] will be dealt with in Chapter XVI; [3] in Chapter XVIII; [4] in Chapter XIII.

A shell has distinct uses when helping other people, and an “invisible helper” will frequently find it invaluable in helping a man who has not yet the strength to protect himself, either against the ever-present swirl of wearisome and wandering thoughts.

There seems no doubt that animals who live in a world of emotion possess a telepathic faculty of sending emotional impulses to others of their kind at a distance. In fact, William J. Long, in his fascinating book *How Animals Talk*, states that he has reason to believe that this method of silent communication is the common language of the whole animal kingdom.

Numerous examples are given by this keen and sympathetic observer of animal life. A setter named Don appeared always to know when his master was returning home, even at unusual and unexpected times.

He knew also when Saturday or holidays came, and when his master intended to take him out into the woods. Another dog named Watch was repeatedly observed to set out to meet his

master at times which constantly varied, within a few moments of the time when his master started for home from a place some three or four miles away, driving a trap drawn by a horse between whom and the dog there was a strong friendship.

The way in which fear or nervousness is readily communicated from a rider to his horse is well known to every horseman. If a wolf-cub breaks away from the pack the mother-wolf, instead of chasing the cub, has been observed to remain quiet, lift her head and look steadily in the direction of the cub, whereupon the latter will waver, halt, and speed back to the pack. A vixen appears to have her family under perfect control at every instant without uttering a sound; one steady look at them, and the cubs instantly cease their play, scamper into the burrow, and remain there until mother returns from her hunting. A wounded wolf, after lying up by itself for a few days, has been known to go straight to the carcass of an animal, eight or ten miles, which the pack had killed in the meantime, there being, of course, no trail to follow.

A Captain Rule has observed that the moment he struck a sperm whale, every other sperm whale within ten miles would turn flukes as if he also had been harpooned. Certain wild birds will make their appearance in the back yard at a moment when a number of other birds are eagerly feeding, and at no other time. The “wing drill” of starlings is a phenomenon which appears explicable only by the telepathic hypothesis. A similar remark applies to the movements of flocks of plovers.

Many huntsmen have observed that if they go out without a gun or any intention to kill, they frequently see and approach very near to wild animals in plenty, but when they go out armed, and with a desire to kill, they find the animals restless suspicious, and unapproachable. One hunter, who has learnt that excitement is transmissible from man to animals, suppressed his own physical and mental excitement, and found that he could then approach his quarry much more easily than he had been able to do before he had learnt his lesson, the truth of this being proved by the tiger skins he had obtained.

Our author goes further, and states that he has met many Indians and others possessed of what certain Africans call “chumfo”, which acts as though it were a distinct sense, giving warning of approaching danger, etc., often in circumstances which preclude the possibility of any information reaching any of the five normal senses.

Readers who are interested in this subject in particular and animal life in general, are strongly advised to read *How Animals Talk*, and other books by William J. Long.

CHAPTER XI

THOUGHT – TRANSFERENCE [CONSCIOUS] AND MENTAL HEALING

It is within the power of almost any two persons, provided they care to devote to the effort sufficient time and perseverance, and are capable of clear and steady thought, to convince themselves of the possibility of thought-transference, and even to become moderately proficient in the art. There is, of course, quite a considerable literature on the subject, such as the *Transaction of the Psychical Research Society*.

The two experiments should agree on a time mutually convenient, devoting say, ten or fifteen minutes daily to the task. Each should then secure himself from interruption of any kind. One should be the thought-projector or transmitter, and the other the receiver; in most cases it is desirable to alternate these roles in order to avoid the risk of one becoming abnormally passive; moreover, it may be found that one is much better at transmitting, the other at receiving.

The transmitter should select a thought, which may be anything from an abstract idea to a concrete object or a simple geometrical figure, concentrate on it, and will to impress it on his friend. It should scarcely be necessary to insist that the mind should be wholly concentrated, being in the condition graphically described by Patanjali as "one pointed". It is well for the inexperienced not to attempt to concentrate for too long lest the attention waver or wander, and a bad habit thus be set up, or strain develop, leading to fatigue. For many, if not for most, seconds are safer than minutes.

The receiver, making his body as comfortable as possible, least any slight bodily uneasiness serve to distract his attention from the matter in hand, must render his mind a blank –a task by no means easy to the inexperienced, but simple enough once the "knack" of it is acquired –and to note the thoughts that drift into it. These he should write down as they appear, his only care being to remain passive, to reject nothing, to encourage nothing.

The transmitter should of course, also keep a record of the thoughts which he sends, and the two records should at suitable intervals be compared.

Unless the experimenters are abnormally deficient in the use of the will and the control of thought, some power of communication will be established in a few weeks or months at latest. The present writer [A.E.P] has known it happen at the first attempt

The student of "white" occultism, once he has satisfied himself of the possibility of thought-transference, will not be content either with academic experiments such as have been described above, or with merely sending out kind thoughts to his friends, useful as these may be in their own measure. It is possible for him to use his powers of thought to far greater effect.

Thus to take an obvious example, suppose the student wishes to help a man who is under the sway of an injurious habit such as drink. He should first ascertain at what hours the patient's mind is likely to be unemployed –such as his hour for going to bed. If the man should be

asleep so much the better.

At such a time he should sit down alone and picture his patient as seated in front of him. Very clear picturing is not essential, but the process is rendered more effective if the image can be pictures vividly, clearly and in detail.

If the patient is asleep he will be drawn to the person thinking of him, and will animate the image of himself that has been formed.

The student should then, with full concentration of mind, fix his attention on the image and address to it the thoughts which he wishes to impress on his patient's mind. He should present these as clear mental images just as he would do if laying arguments before him or pleading with him in words.

Care must be taken not to attempt to control in any way the patient's will; the effort should be solely to place before his mind the ideas which, appealing to his intelligence and his emotions, may help him to form a right judgement and to make an effort to carry it out in action.

If an attempt is made to impose upon him a particular line of conduct, and the attempt succeed, even then little, if anything has been gained. For, in the first place, the weakening effect of the compulsion on his mind may do him more harm than the wrong-doing from which he has been saved. In the second place the mental tendency towards vicious self-indulgence will not be changed by opposing an obstacle in the way of indulging in a particular form of it. Checked in one direction, it will find another, and a new vice will supplant the old. Thus a man forcibly constrained to be temperate by the domination of his will is no more cured of the vice than if he were locked up in prison.

Apart from this practical consideration, it is entirely wrong in principle, for a man to try to impose his will on another, even in order to make him do it right. True growth is not helped by external coercion ; the intelligence must be convinced, the emotions aroused and purified, before real gain is made.

If the student wishes to give any other kind of help by his thought, he should proceed in a similar way. As we saw in Chapter VIII, a strong wish for a friend's good, sent to him as a general protective agency, will remain about him as a thought-form for a time proportional to the strength of the thought, and will guard him against evil, acting as a barrier against hostile thoughts, and even warding off physical dangers. A thought of peace and consolation similarly sent will soothe and calm the mind, spreading around its object an atmosphere of calm.

It is thus apparent that thought-transference is closely associated with mind-cure, which aims at transferring good, strong thoughts from the operator to the patient. Examples of this are Christian Science, mental science, mind-healing etc.

In those methods where an attempt is made to cure a man simply by believing he is well, a

considerable amount of hypnotic influence is frequently exercised. The mental, astral, and etheric bodies of man are so closely connected that if a man mentally believes himself, well, his mind may be able to force his body into harmony with his mental state and thus produce a cure.

H. P. Blavatsky considered it legitimate and even wise to use hypnotism to lift a person out of drunkenness, for example, provided the operator knew enough to be able to break the habit and free the will of the patient so that it might set itself against the vice of drunkenness. The will-power of the patient having become paralysed by his addiction to drinking, the hypnotist uses the force of hypnotism as a temporary expedient to enable the man's will to recover and re-assert itself.

Nervous diseases yield the most readily to the power of the will because the nervous system has been shaped for the expression of spiritual powers on the physical plane. The most rapid results are obtained when the sympathetic system is first worked upon because that system is the most directly related to the aspect of will in the form of desire, the cerebrospinal system being more directly related to the aspect of cognition and of pure will.

Another method of healing requires the healer first to discover accurately what is wrong, to picture to himself the diseased organ, and then to image it as it ought to be. Into the mental thought-form he has thus created he next builds astral matter, and then by the force of magnetism he further densifies it by etheric matter, finally building in the denser materials of gases, liquids and solids, using the materials available in the body and supplying from outside any deficiencies.

It is obvious that this method demands at least some idea of anatomy and physiology; nevertheless, in the case of an advanced stage of evolution, the will of an operator who may be lacking in knowledge in his physical consciousness may be guided from a higher plane.

In cures effected by this method there is not the same danger that accompanies those wrought by the easier, and therefore more common, method of working on the sympathetic system alluded to above.

There is, however, a certain danger in healing by the power of will viz., the danger of driving the disease into a higher vehicle. Disease being often the final working out of evil that existed previously on the higher planes, it is better to let it work itself out than forcibly to check it and throw it back into the subtler vehicle.

If it be the result of evil desire or thought, then physical means of cure are preferable to mental, because the physical means cannot cast the trouble back into the higher plane, as could happen if mental means were employed. Hence mesmerism is a suitable process, this being physical [see The Etheric Double Chapter XVIII].

A true method of healing is to render the astral and mental bodies perfectly harmonious; but

this method is far more difficult and not as rapid as the will method. Purity of emotion and mind means physical health, and a person whose mind is perfectly pure and balanced will not generate fresh bodily disease, though he may have some unexhausted karma to work off –or he may even take on himself some of the disharmonies caused by others.

There are, of course, other methods of using the power of thought to heal, for the mind is the one great creative power in the universe, divine in the universe, human in man; and as the mind can create so can it restore; where there is injury the mind can turn its forces to the healing of the injury.

In passing we may note also that the power of "glamour" [vide The Astral Body] is simply that of making a clear strong image and then projecting it into the mind of another.

The aid which is often rendered to another by prayer is largely of the character just described, the frequent effectiveness of prayer compared with that of ordinary good wishes being attributable to the greater concentration and intensity thrown by the pious believer into his prayer. Similar concentration and intensity without the use of prayer would bring about similar results. The student will bear in mind that we are speaking here of the effects of prayer brought about by the power of the thought of the one who prays. There are of course other results of prayer, due to a call on the attention of some evolved human, super-human, or even non-human intelligence, which may result in direct aid being rendered by a power superior to any possessed by the one who offers the prayer. With this type of "answers to prayer", however, we are not here immediately concerned.

All that can be done by thought for the living can be done even more easily for the "dead". As was explained in The Astral Body the tendency of a man after death is to turn his attention inwards, and to live in the feelings and mind rather than in the external world. The re-arrangement of the astral body by the Desire- Elemental further tends to shut in the mental energies and to prevent their outer expression.

But the person thus checked as to his outward-going energies becomes all the more receptive of influences from the mental world, and can, therefore, be helped, cheered, and counseled far more effectively than when he was on earth.

In the world of the after-death life, a loving thought is palpable to the senses as is here a loving word or tender caress. Everyone who passes over should therefore, be followed by thoughts of love and peace, by aspirations for his swift passage onwards. Only too many remain in the intermediate state longer than they otherwise should because they have not friends who know how to help them from this side of death.

The occultists who founded the great religions were not unmindful of the service due from those left on earth to those who had passed onwards. Hence the Hindu has his Shraddha, the Christian his Masses and prayers for the "dead".

Similarly, it is possible for thought-transference to take place in the reverse direction. i.e., from the disembodied to those physically alive. Thus, for example, the strong thought of a lecturer on a particular subject may attract the attention of disembodied entities interested in that subject; an audience, in fact, often contains a greater number of people in astral than in physical bodies.

Sometimes one of these visitors may know more of the subject than the lecturer, in which case he may assist by suggestions or illustrations. If the lecturer is clairvoyant he may see his assistant and the new ideas will be materialised in subtler matter before him. If he is not clairvoyant, the helper will probably impress the ideas upon the lecturer's brain, and in such a case the lecturer may well suppose them to be his own.

This kind of assistance is often afforded by an "invisible helper" [vide *The Astral Body*, p.245-6].

The power of the combined thought of a group of people used deliberately to a certain end is well known, both to occultists and to others who know something of the deeper science of the mind. Thus in certain parts of Christendom it is the custom to preface the sending of a mission to evangelise some special district by definite and sustained thinking. In this way a thought-atmosphere is created in the district highly favourable to the spread of the teachings thought about, and receptive brains are prepared for the instruction which is to be offered to them.

The contemplative orders of the Roman Catholic Church do much good and useful work by thought, as do the recluses of the Hindu and Buddhist faiths.

Where in fact, a good and pure intelligence sets itself to work to aid the world by diffusing through it noble and lofty thoughts, there definite service is done to man, and the lonely thinker becomes one of the lifters of the world.

Another example, which we may class as partly conscious and partly unconscious, of the way in which the thought atmosphere of one man can powerfully affect another man, is that of the association of a pupil or disciple with a spiritual teacher or guru.

This is well understood in the East, where it is recognised that the most important and effective part of the training of a disciple is that he shall live constantly in the presence of his teacher and bathe in his aura. The various vehicles of the teacher are all vibrating with a steady and powerful swing at rates both higher and more regular than any which the pupil can maintain, though he may sometimes reach them for a few moments. But the constant pressure of the stronger thought-waves of the teacher gradually raise those of the pupil into the same key. A rough analogy may be taken from musical training. A person who has yet but little musical ear finds it difficult to sing correct intervals alone, but if he joins with another stronger voice which is already perfectly trained his task becomes easier.

The important point is that the dominant note of the teacher is always sounding so that its action is affecting the pupil night and day without the need of any special thought on the part of either of them. Thus it becomes much easier for the growth of the subtle vehicles of the pupils to take place in the right direction.

No ordinary man, acting automatically and without intention, can exercise even one-hundredth part of the carefully directed influence of a spiritual teacher. But numbers may to some extent compensate for lack of individual power, so that the ceaseless though unnoticed pressure exercised upon us by the opinions and feelings of our associates leads us frequently to absorb, without knowing it, many of their prejudices, as we saw in the preceding chapter, when dealing with racial and national thought-influence.

An "accepted" pupil of a Master is so closely in touch with the Master's thought that he can train himself at any time to see what that thought is upon any given subject; in that way he is often saved from error. The Master can at any time send a thought through the pupil either as a suggestion or a message. If for example, the pupil is writing a letter or giving a lecture, the Master is subconsciously aware of the fact, and may at any moment throw into the mind of the pupil a sentence to be included in the letter or used in the lecture. In earlier stages the pupil is often unaware of this, and supposes the ideas to have arisen spontaneously in his own mind, but he very soon learns to recognise the thought of the Master. In fact, it is most desirable that he should learn to recognise it because there are many entities on the mental and astral planes who, with the best intentions and in the most friendly way, are very ready to make similar suggestions, and it is clearly necessary that the pupil should learn to distinguish from whom they come.

CHAPTER XIII

THOUGHT CENTRES

There are in the mental world certain definitely localised thought-centres, actual places in space, to which thoughts of the same type are drawn by the similitude of their vibrations, just as men who speak the same language are drawn together. Thoughts on a given subject gravitate to one of these centres, which absorbs any number of ideas, coherent or incoherent, right or wrong, the centre being a kind of focus for all the converging lines of thought about that subject, these again, being linked by millions of lines with all sorts of other subjects.

Philosophical thought, for example, has a distinct realm of its own with sub-divisions corresponding to the chief philosophical ideas; all sorts of curious inter-relations exist between these various centres, exhibiting the way in which different systems of philosophy have linked themselves together. Such collections of ideas represent all that has been thought upon that subject.

Anyone who thinks deeply, say on philosophy, brings himself in touch with this group of vortices. If he is in his mental body, whether he be asleep or "dead", he is drawn spatially to the appropriate part of the mental plane. If the physical body to which he may be attached prevents this, he will rise into a condition of sympathetic vibration with one or other of these vortices, and will receive from them whatever he is capable of assimilating; but this process will

be some-what less free than would be the case if he had actually drifted into it.

There is not precisely a thought-centre for drama and fiction, but there is a region for what may be called romantic thought –a vast, but rather ill-defined group of forms, including on one side a host of vague but brilliant combinations connected with the relation of the sexes, on another the emotions characteristic of mediaeval chivalry, and on yet another masses of fairy stories.

The influence of thought-centres on people is one of the reasons why people think in droves like sheep; for it is much easier for a man of lazy mentality to accept a ready-made thought from someone else than to go through the mental labour of considering a subject and arriving at a decision for himself.

The corresponding phenomenon in the astral world works in a slightly different manner. Emotion-forms do not all fly up to one world-centre, but they do coalesce with other forms of the same nature in their own neighbourhood, so that enormous and very powerful "blocks" of feeling are floating about almost everywhere, and a man may very readily come into contact with them and be influenced by them. Examples of such influence occur in cases of panic, maniacal fury, melancholia, etc. Such undesirable currents of emotion reach a man through the umbilical chakram. In a similar manner a man may be beneficially affected by noble emotions operating through the heart chakram.

It is difficult to describe the appearance of these reservoirs of thought; each thought appears to make a track, burrowing a way for itself through the matter of the plane. That way, once established, remains open, or rather may readily be re-opened, and its particles re-vivified by any fresh effort. If this effort be at all in the general direction of the first line of thought it is far easier for it to adapt itself sufficiently to pass along that line than it is for it to hew out for itself a slightly different line, however closely parallel that may be to the one which already exists.

The content of these thought-centres is, of course, far more than enough for any ordinary thinker to draw upon. For those who are sufficiently strong and persevering there are yet other possibilities connected with these centres.

First: It is possible through these thought-centres to reach the minds of those who generated their force. Hence one who is strong, eager, reverent, and teachable, may actually sit at the feet of great thinkers of the past and learn from them of the problems of life. A man is thus able to psychometrise the different thought-forms in a thought-centre, follow them to their thinkers, with whom they are connected by vibration, and acquire other information from them.

Second : There is such a thing as the Truth in itself, or, if that idea is too abstract to be grasped, we may say it is the conception of that Truth in the mind of our Solar Logos. That thought can be contacted by one who has attained conscious union with the deity, but by no one below that level. Nevertheless, reflections of it are to be seen, cast from plane to plane, growing ever dimmer as they descend. Some at least of these reflections are within reach of a man whose thought can soar up to meet them.

From the existence of these thought-centres follows another point of considerable interest. It is obvious that many thinkers may be drawn simultaneously to the same mental region, and may gather there exactly the same ideas. When that happens it is possible also that their expression of those ideas in the physical world may coincide; then they may be accused by the ignorant of plagiarism. That this does not happen more frequently than actually is the case is due to the density of men's brains, which comparatively rarely bring anything learned on higher planes.

This phenomena happens not only in the field of literature, but also in that of inventions, for it is well known in Patent Offices that practically identical inventions often arrive simultaneously.

Other ideas may be obtained by writers from the akashic records; but this aspect of our subject will be dealt with in a later chapter.

CHAPTER XIII

PHYSICAL OR "WAKING" CONSCIOUSNESS

In this chapter we shall consider the mental body as it exists and is used during ordinary "waking" consciousness, i.e., in ordinary physical life.

It will be convenient to deal seriatim with the three factors which determine the nature and functioning of the mental body in physical life, viz.:-

[1] The Physical Life: [2] The Emotional Life: [3] The Mental Life

[1] The Physical Life

In the Astral Body, Chapter VIII, the factors in the physical life which affect the astral body were enumerated and described. Most of what was written there applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to the mental body. We shall here, therefore not deal again at any length with those factors, but merely briefly recapitulate them, with a minimum of comment where necessary.

As every part of the physical body has its corresponding astral and mental counterparts, it follows that a coarse and impure physical body will tend to make the mental body also coarse and impure.

In view of the fact that the seven grades of mental matter correspond respectively to the seven grades of physical [as well, of course, as to those of astral] matter, it would seem that the mental body would be more especially affected by the physical solids, liquids, gases, and ethers, i.e., by the four orders of physical matter.

It will, of course be clear to the student that a mental body composed of the coarse varieties of mental matter will respond to the coarser types of thought more readily than to the finer varieties.

Coarse food and drink tend to produce a coarse mental body. Flesh foods, alcohol, tobacco are harmful to the physical, astral and mental bodies. The same applies to nearly all drugs. Where a drug, such as opium, is taken in order to relieve great pain, it should be taken as sparingly as possible. One who knows how to do it can remove the evil effect of opium from the mental and astral bodies after it has done its work upon the physical.

Furthermore, a body fed on flesh and alcohol is especially liable to be thrown out of health by the opening up of the higher consciousness; nervous diseases, in fact partly due to the fact that the higher consciousness is trying to express itself through bodies clogged with flesh products and poisoned by alcohol.

Dirt of all kinds is often objectionable in the higher worlds than in the physical. Thus for example, the mental and astral counterparts of the waste matter which is constantly being thrown off by the physical body as invisible perspiration are of the most undesirable character.

Loud, sharp or sudden noises should, as far as possible, be avoided by anyone who wishes to keep his astral and mental bodies in order. This is one of the reasons why the life of a busy city is one to be avoided by an occult student, as well as by children upon whose plastic astral and mental bodies the effects of ceaseless noise are disastrous. The cumulative effect of noise on the mental body is a feeling of fatigue and inability to think clearly.

A man's mental body is affected by almost everything in his environment. Thus for example, the pictures which hang on the walls of his rooms influence him, not only because they keep before his eyes the expression of certain ideas, but also because the artist puts a great deal of himself, of his inmost thought and feeling, into his work. This we term the unseen counterparts of the picture, clearly expressed in mental and astral matter, and these radiate from the picture just as surely as scent inheres in and radiates from a flower.

Books are specially strong centres of thought-forms, and their unnoticed influence in a man's life is often a powerful one. It is, therefore, unwise to keep on one's bookshelves books of an unpleasant or undesirable character.

Talismans or amulets affect a man's life to some extent. They have already been described in [The Etheric Double](#) and The Astral Body. Briefly, they operate in two ways: [1] they radiate waves of their own which are intrinsically helpful; [2] the knowledge of the presence and purpose of the talisman awakens the faith and courage of the wearer and thus calls up the reserve strength of his own will.

If a talisman is "linked" with its maker, and the wearer calls upon the maker mentally, the ego will respond and reinforce the vibrations of the talisman by a strong wave of his own more

powerful thought.

A talisman strongly charged with magnetism may thus be an invaluable help; the physical nature, as well as the emotions and the mind, have to be mastered, and the physical is, without doubt, the most difficult to deal with. Some people scorn such things as talismans; others have found the path to occultism so arduous that they are glad to avail themselves of any assistance that may be offered to them.

The strongest talisman on this planet is probably the Rod of Power which is kept at Shamballa and used in Initiations and at other times.

A man is affected also by the colours of objects which surround him. For just as a feeling or thought produces in subtler matter a certain colour, so, conversely the presence of a given colour even in physical objects exerts a steady pressure, tending to arouse the feeling or thought appropriate to that colour. Hence the rationale, for example, of the use of certain selected colours by the Christian Church in altar frontals, vestments etc., in the endeavour to superinduce the condition of mind and feeling especially appropriate to the occasion.

A man is affected by the walls and furniture of his rooms because, by his thoughts and feelings he unconsciously magnetises physical objects near him, so that they possess the power of suggesting thoughts and feelings of the same type, either to himself or to any person who puts himself in the way of their influence. Striking instances of this phenomena occur, as is well known, in the case of prison cells and other similar places.

Hence, also, the value of "holy places", where the atmosphere is literally vibrating at a high rate. A room set apart for meditation and high thought soon gains an atmosphere purer and subtler than that of the surrounding world, and the wise student will take due advantage of this fact both for his own sake and for the helping of those around him.

As an example of this kind of thought-force, we may cite the case of certain ships or engines which have the reputation of being "unlucky". Instances have unquestionably occurred where accident after accident occurs in connection with them without apparent reason.

The effect could have been brought about in some such way as the following. Feelings of intense hatred may have been entertained against the builder of the ship or against her first captain. These feelings of themselves would probably not be sufficient actually to cause serious misfortune.

But in the life of every ship there are many occasions on which an accident is only just averted by vigilance and promptitude, in which a single moment's delay or slackness would be sufficient to precipitate a catastrophe.

Such a mass of thought – forms as those described would be amply sufficient to cause that momentary lack of vigilance or momentary hesitation; and that would be the easiest line along

which the malignity could work.

It is clear that the reverse is also true, and that a "lucky" atmosphere can be built up about material objects, etc., by the optimistic and cheerful thoughts of those who use the objects.

Similarly with regards to relics. Any article highly charged with personal magnetism may continue to radiate its influence for centuries with practically undiminished force. Even if the relic be not genuine, the force poured into it by centuries of devotional feeling will magnetise it strongly and make it a force for good.

There is thus occult wisdom in the following advice, quaint as it is in expression: "Knead love into the bread you bake; wrap strength and courage in the parcel you tie for the woman with the weary face; hand trust and candour with the coin you pay to the man with the suspicious eyes." The student of the Good Law has abundant opportunities of distributing blessings all about him unobtrusively, although the recipients may be quite unconscious of the source of that which comes to them.

As mentioned in Chapter XI, when dealing with Thought-Transference, physical association with a more highly evolved person may be of considerable help in the development and training of the mental body. Just as the heat radiations from a fire, warm articles placed near the fire, so may the thought-radiations of a thinker stronger than ourselves cause our mental bodies to vibrate sympathetically with him, and for the time being we feel our mental power increased.

An example of this effect often occurs at eg., a lecture; a person in the audience appears whilst he is listening to the speaker to understand fully what is being said, but later the conception seems to grow dim and maybe completely elude the mind when an attempt is made to reproduce it. The explanation is that, the masterful vibrations of the stronger thinker have at the time shaped the forms taken by the mental body of the listener, but afterwards that mental body is unable of its own power to resume those shapes.

A true teacher will thus aid his disciples far more by keeping him near than by any spoken words.

Unseen entities associated with ocean, mountain, forest, waterfalls, etc., radiate vibrations which awaken unaccustomed portions of mental, astral and etheric bodies, and hence, from this point of view, travel may be beneficial to all three bodies.

In general, it may be said that everything which promotes health and well-being of the physical body reacts favourably also upon the higher vehicles.

The converse of course, is also true, the emotional and mental life having profound effects upon the physical body. For, while it is true that the mental and physical bodies are obviously,

in the very nature of things, more amenable to the power of thought than is the physical body, yet the matter of even the physical body may be moulded by the power of emotion and thought. Thus for example, it is well known that any habitual line of thought, virtue or vice, makes its impress on the physical features, a phenomenon so common that its full significance has not perhaps been adequately realised by most people. Another example is that of the "stigmata", appearing on the bodies of saints, many instances of which are on record. Innumerable other examples may be furnished from the literature of modern psychoanalysis and other sources.

In the highly evolved Fifth Race man of today, in fact, the physical body is largely ruled by mental conditions; hence anxiety, mental suffering and worry, producing nervous tension, readily disturb organic processes and bring about weakness and disease. Right thought and feeling react upon the physical body and increase its power to assimilate prana or vitality.

Mental strength and serenity thus directly promote physical health, for the evolved Fifth Race man lives his physical life literally in his nervous system.

[2] THE EMOTIONAL LIFE

The mental and astral bodies are so closely linked together as to produce profound effects upon one another.

The intimate association between kama [desire] and manas [mind], and their actions and reactions on each other, have already been dealt with in Chapter VI on Kama-Manas. In this chapter we will deal merely with a few further incidental effects of the astral on the mental body, and also with the effect of the mental body on the astral body.

A flood of emotion sweeping over the astral body does not itself greatly affect the mental body, although for the time it may render it almost impossible for any activity from that mental body to come through into the physical brain. That is not because the mental body itself is affected, but because the astral body, which acts as a bridge between the mental body and the brain, is vibrating so entirely at one rate as to be incapable of conveying any undulation which is not in harmony with that one rate.

A typical example of the effect of powerful emotion on mental activity is afforded by a man "in love"; while in this state the yellow of intellect entirely vanishes from his aura.

Coarse sensuality in the astral body, which is represented by a peculiarly unpleasant hue, is quite incapable of reproducing itself in the mental body. This is an example of the principle that the matter of the various planes, as it becomes finer, gradually loses the power of expressing the lower qualities.

Thus a man may form a mental image which evokes sensual feeling in him, but the thought and the image will express themselves in astral matter, and not in mental. It will leave a very definite impression of its peculiar hue upon the astral body, but in the mental body it will

intensify the colours which represent its concomitant evils of selfishness, conceit and deception.

It sometimes happens that certain groups of feeling and thought, some desirable, some undesirable, are closely linked together. Thus for example, it is well known that deep devotion and a certain form of sensuality are frequently almost inextricably mingled.

A man who finds himself troubled by this unpleasant conjunction may reap the benefit of the devotion, without suffering from the ill-effects of the sensuality, by surrounding his mental body with a rigid shell so far as its lower sub-divisions are concerned. In this way he will effectually shut out the lower influences while still allowing the higher to play upon him unhindered.

This is but one example of a phenomenon of which there are many varieties in the mental world.

The effect of the mental body on the astral body is, of course, considerable, and the student should pay close attention to this fact. He will recollect that each body is controlled ultimately by the body next above it. Thus the physical body cannot rule itself, but the passions and desires of the astral body can direct and control it.

The astral body, in its turn, must be trained and brought under control by the mental body, for it is by thought that we can change desire and begin to transmute it into will, which is the higher aspect of desire. Only by the Self as Thought can be mastered the Self as Desire.

The very sense of freedom in choosing between desires indicates that something higher than desire is operative, and that something higher is manas, in which resides freewill, so far as anything lower than itself is concerned.

The student will recollect also that the chakrams or force-centres of the astral body are built and controlled from the mental plane, just as the physical brain centres were built from the astral plane.

Every impulse sent by the mental body to the physical brain has to pass through the astral body, and as astral matter is far more responsive to thought vibrations than is physical matter, the effect on the astral body is proportionately greater. This process was dealt with in *The Astral Body*, p. 78, to which book the student is referred.

Hence as the vibrations of mental matter excite also those of astral matter, a man's thoughts tend to stir his emotions. Thus –as is well known –a man will sometimes, by thinking over what he considers his wrongs, easily make himself angry. The converse is equally true, though it is often forgotten. By thinking calmly and reasonably a man can prevent or dismiss anger or other undesirable emotions.

An example of the effect of a scientific and orderly habit of mind on the astral body is illustrated

in Man Visible and Invisible on Plate XX, which portrays the astral body of a scientific type of man. The astral colours tend to fall into regular bands, and the lines of demarcation between them become clear and definite. In extreme cases the intellectual development leads to the entire elimination of devotional feeling, and considerably reduces sensuality.

The acquirement of concentration and, in general, the development of the mental body, also affects the dream life, and tends to make the dreams become vivid, well-sustained, rational, even instructive.

The astral body, in fact, ought to be, and in a developed man is, merely a reflection of the colours of the mental body, indicating that the man allows himself to feel only what his reason dictates.

Conversely, no emotion under any circumstances ought to affect the mental body in the least, for the mental body is the home, not of passions or emotions, but of thought.

[3] THE MENTAL LIFE

Although some little work in the building and evolution of a man's mind may be done from outside, yet most must result from the activity of his own consciousness. If, therefore a man would have a mental body strong, well-vitalised, active, able to grasp loftier thoughts presented to him, he must work steadily at right thinking.

Each man is the person who most constantly affects his own mental body. Others, such as speakers and writers, affect it occasionally, but he always. His own influence over the composition of his mental body is far stronger than that of anyone else, and he himself fixes the normal vibratory rate of his mind. Thoughts which do not harmonise with that rate will be flung aside when they touch his mind. If he thinks truth, a lie cannot make a lodgment in his mind; if he thinks love, hate cannot disturb him; if he thinks wisdom, ignorance cannot paralyse him.

The mind must not be allowed to lie as it were fallow, for then any thought-seed may take root in it and grow; it must not be allowed to vibrate as it pleases, for that means it will answer to any passing vibration.

A man's mind is his own, and he should allow entrance only to such thoughts as he, the ego, chooses.

The majority of men do not know how to think at all, and even those who are a little more advanced rarely think definitely and strongly, except during the moments when they are actually engaged in some piece of work which demands their whole attention. Consequently large numbers of minds are always lying fallow, ready to receive what ever seed may be sown in them.

The vast majority of people, if they will watch their thoughts closely, will find that they are very largely made up of a casual stream of thoughts which are not their own thoughts at all, but simply the cast-off fragments of other people's. The ordinary man hardly ever knows exactly of what he is thinking at any particular moment, or why he is thinking of it. Instead of directing his mind to some definite point he allows it to run riot, or lets it lie fallow, so that any causal seed cast into it may germinate and come to fruition there.

A student who is earnestly trying to raise himself somewhat above the thought of the average man should bear in mind that a very large proportion of the insurgent thought which is so constantly pressing upon him is at a lower level than his own and, therefore, he needs to guard himself against its influence. There is a vast ocean of thought upon all sorts of utterly unimportant subjects that it is necessary to strive rigidly to exclude it. This is one reason why to "Tyle the Lodge" is the "constant care" of every Freemason.

If a man will take the trouble to form the habit of sustained and concentrated thought, he will find that his brain, trained to listen only to the promptings of the ego –the real Thinker –will remain quiescent when not in use, and will decline to receive and respond to casual currents from the surrounding ocean of thought, so that it will no longer be impervious to influences from the higher planes, where insight is keener and judgement truer than it ever can be down here.

It is only when the man can hold his mind steady, can reduce it to quietude, and keep it in that condition without thinking, that the higher consciousness can assert itself. Then is the man ready to enter on the practice of meditation and Yoga, as we shall see in due course.

That is the practical lesson in training the mental body. The man who practices it will discover that by thinking life can be made nobler and happier, and that it is true that by wisdom an end can be put to pain.

The wise man will watch his thought with the greatest care, realising that in it he possesses a powerful instrument, for the right use of which he is responsible. It is his duty to govern his thought lest it should run riot and do evil to himself and others. It is his duty to develop his thought-power because by means of it a vast amount of good can be done.

Reading does not build the mental body; thought alone builds it. Reading is valuable only as it furnishes materials for thought, and a man's mental growth will be in proportion to the amount of thought he expends in his reading. With regular and persistent –but not excessive –exercise, the power of thinking will grow just as muscle-power grows by exercise. Without such thinking the mental body remains loosely formed and unorganised; without gaining concentration –the power of fixing the thought on a definite point –thought-power cannot be exercised at all.

The law of life, that growth results from exercise, thus applies to the mental body just as it does to the physical body. When the mental body is exercised and made to vibrate under the action

of thought, fresh matter is drawn in from the mental atmosphere and is built into the body, which thus increases in size as well as in complexity of structure. The amount of the thought determines the growth of the body, the quality of the thought determines the kind of matter employed in that growth.

We may profitably consider the method of reading a little more in detail. In a book that is carefully written, each sentence or paragraph contains a clear statement of a definite idea, the idea being represented by the author's thought-form. That thought-form is usually surrounded with various subsidiary forms which are the expressions of corollaries of necessary deductions from the main idea.

In the mind of the reader there should be built up an exact duplicate of the author's thought-form, perhaps immediately, perhaps by degrees. Whether the forms indicating corollaries also appear depends on the nature of the reader's mind, i.e., whether he is quick to see in a moment all that follows from a certain statement.

A mentally undeveloped person cannot make a clear reflection at all, but builds up a sort of amorphous incorrect mass, instead of a geometrical form. Others may make a recognisable form, but with blunted edges and angles, or with one part out of proportion to the rest.

Others may make a kind of skeleton of it, showing that they have grasped the outline of the idea, but not in any living way and without any details. Yet others may touch one side of the idea and not the other, thus building half the form; or seize upon one point and neglect the rest.

A good student will reproduce the image of the central idea accurately and at once, and the surrounding ideas will come into being one by one as he revolves the central idea in his mind.

One of the principal reasons for imperfect images is lack of attention. A clairvoyant can often see a reader's mind occupied with half-a-dozen subjects simultaneously. In his brain are seething household cares, business worries, memory and anticipation of pleasures, weariness at having to study, and so forth, these occupying nine-tenths of his mental body, leaving the remaining one-tenth to make a despairing effort to grasp the thought-form he is supposed to be assimilating from the book.

The result of such fragmentary and desultory reading is to fill the mental body with a mass of little, unconnected thought-forms like pebbles, instead of building up in it an orderly edifice.

It is clear, therefore, that in order to be able to use the mind and the mental body effectively, training in paying attention and concentration are essential, and the man must learn to clear his mind of all extraneous and irrelevant thoughts whilst he is studying.

A trained student may, through the thought-form of the author, get into touch with the mind of the author, and obtain from him additional information or light on difficult points, though, unless the student is highly developed he will imagine that the new thoughts which come to him are

his own instead of those of the author.

Remembering that all mental work done on the physical plane must be done through the physical brain in order to succeed, the physical brain must be trained and ordered so that the mental body can work readily through it.

It is well known that certain parts of the brain are connected with certain qualities in the man, and with his power to think along certain lines: all these must be brought into order and duly correlated with the zones in the mental body.

A student of occultism of course trains himself deliberately in the art of thinking; consequently his thought is much more powerful than that of the untrained man, and is likely to influence a wider circle and to produce a much greater effect. This happens quite outside his own consciousness without his making any specific effort in the matter.

But because the occultist has learned the tremendous power of thought, his responsibility in the right use of it is proportionately the greater, and he will take pains to utilise it for the helping of others.

A warning may not be out of place to those who have a tendency to be argumentative. Those who are easily provoked to argument should recollect that when they rush out eagerly to verbal battle they throw open the doors of their mental fortress, leaving it undefended. At such times any thought- forces which may happen to be in their neighbourhood can enter and possess their mental bodies. While strength is being wasted over points which are often of no importance, the whole tone of their mental bodies is being steadily deteriorated by the influences which are flowing into it. The occult student should exercise great care in permitting himself to enter into arguments. It is a common experience that argument seldom tends to alter the opinion of either side; in most cases it confirms the opinions already held.

Every hour of life gives opportunity for consciousness to build up the mental vehicle. Waking or sleeping we are ever building our mental bodies. Every quiver of consciousness, though it be due only to a passing thought, draws into the mental body some particles of mental matter and shakes out other particles from it. If the mental body is made to vibrate by pure and lofty thoughts, the rapidity of the vibrations causes particles of the coarser matter to be shaken out and their place is taken by finer particles. In this way the mental body can be made steadily finer and purer. A mental body thus composed of finer materials, will give no response to coarse and evil thoughts; a mental body built of gross materials will be affected by evil passers-by and will remain unresponsive to and unbenefited by the good.

The above applies more specifically to the "form-side" of the mental body. Turning to the "life-side", the student should also bear in mind that the very essence of consciousness is constantly to identify itself with the Not-Self, and as constantly to re-assert itself by rejecting the Not-Self. Consciousness, in fact, consists of this alternating assertion and negation – "I am this" – "I am not this". Hence consciousness is, and causes in matter, the attracting and

repelling that we call vibration. Thus the quality of the vibrations set up by the consciousness determines the fineness or coarseness of the matter which is drawn into the mental body.

As we saw in Chapter XI, the thought-vibrations of another, whose thoughts are lofty, playing on us tend to arouse vibrations in our mental bodies of such matter as is capable of responding, and these vibrations disturb and even shake out some of that which is too coarse to vibrate at his high rate of activity. Hence the benefit we receive from another is largely dependent upon our own past thinking because, to be beneficially affected, we must first have in our mental bodies some of the higher types of matter which his thought can affect.

The mental body is subject to the laws of habit just as are the other vehicles. Hence, if we accustom our mental bodies to a certain type of vibration, they learn to reproduce it easily and readily. Thus for example, if a man allows himself to think evil of others it soon becomes easier habitually to think evil of them than good. In such ways often arise prejudices which blind a man to the good points of others, and enormously magnify the evil in them.

Many persons, through ignorance, fall into habits of evil thought; it is, of course, equally possible to form habits of good thoughts. It is not a difficult matter to train oneself to look for the desirable rather than the undesirable qualities in the people whom we meet. Hence will arise the habit of liking, rather than disliking people. By such practices, our minds begin to work more easily along the grooves of admiration and appreciation instead of along those of suspicion and disparagement. A systematic use of thought-power will thus be make life easier and pleasanter, and also build the right kind of matter into our mental bodies.

Many people do not exercise their mental abilities as much as they should do; their minds are receptacles rather than creators, constantly accepting other people's thoughts instead of forming their own from within.

A realisation of this fact should induce man to change the attitude of his consciousness in daily life and to watch the working of his mind. At first considerable distress may be felt when a man perceives that much of his own thinking is not his own at all; that thoughts come to him he knows not whence, and take themselves off again he knows not whither; that his mind is little more than a place through which thoughts are passing.

Having reached this preliminary stage of mental self-consciousness, a man should next observe what difference there is between the condition of thoughts when they come into his mind and when they go out of it –i.e.,, what it is that he himself has added to them during their stay with him. In this way his mind will rapidly become really active and develop its creative powers.

Next the man should choose with the utmost deliberation what he will allow to remain in his mind. When he finds there a thought that is good he will dwell upon it and strengthen it, and send it out again as a beneficent agent. When he finds in his mind a thought that is evil he will promptly eject it.

The careless play of thought on undesirable ideas and qualities is an active danger, creating a tendency towards such undesirable things, and leading to actions embodying them. A man who dallies in thought with the idea of an evil action may find himself performing it before he realises what he is doing. When the gate of opportunity swings open the mental action rushes out and precipitates action. For all action springs from thought; even when action is performed—as we say—without thought, it is nevertheless the instinctive expression of the thoughts, desires and feelings which the man has allowed to grow within himself in earlier days.

After pursuing steadily for some time this practice of choosing what thoughts he will harbour, the man will find that fewer and fewer evil thoughts flow into his mind; that such thoughts, in fact, will be thrown back by the automatic action of the mind itself. His mind also will begin to act as a magnet for all the similar thoughts that are around him. Thus the man will gather into his mental body a mass of good material and his mental body will grow richer in its content every year.

Thus we see that the great danger to be avoided is that of allowing the creation of thought-images to be incited from without, of allowing stimuli from the outer world to call up images in the mental body, to throw the creative mental matter into thought-forms, charged with energy, which will necessarily seek to discharge and thus realise themselves. In this ungoverned activity of the mental body lies the source of practically all our inner struggle and spiritual difficulties. It is ignorance which permits this undisciplined functioning of the mental body; that ignorance should be replaced by knowledge, and we should learn to control our mental bodies, so that they are not roused from without to making images, but are ours to use as we will.

An immense amount of suffering is caused by undisciplined imagination. The failure to control the lower passions [especially sex-desire] is the result of an undisciplined imagination, not of a weak will. Even though strong desire is felt, it is creative thought which brings about action. There is no danger in merely seeing or thinking about the object of desire, but when a man imagines himself as giving way to his desires, and allows the desires to strengthen the image he has made, then his danger begins. It is important to realise that there is no power in objects of desire as such, unless and until we indulge in imaginations which are creative. Once having done this, struggle is certain to ensue.

In this struggle we may call upon what we think is our will, and try to escape from the results of our own imaginings by frantic resistance. Few have learnt that anxious resistance inspired by fear are very different from will. The will should rather be employed to control the imagination in the first instance, thus eradicating the cause of our troubles at its source and origin.

As we shall see in a later chapter, the materials which we gather during the present life are, in the after-death life, worked up into mental powers and faculties which will find further expression in our future lives. The mental body of the next incarnation depends on the work we are doing in our present mental body. Karma brings the harvest according to our sowing; we cannot isolate one life from another, nor miraculously create something out of nothing.

As it is written in the Chandogyopanishat, "Man is a creature of reflection; that which he reflects on in this life he becomes the same hereafter."

To combat and change habits of thought, a process which involves ejecting from the mental body one set of mental particles and replacing them by others of a higher type, is naturally difficult at first, just as it is usually difficult at first to break physical habits. But it can be done and, as the old form changes, right thinking becomes increasingly easy, and finally spontaneous.

There is hardly any limit to the degree to which a man may re-create himself by concentrated mental activity. As we have seen, schools of healing –such as Christian Science, Mental Science, and others –utilise this powerful agency in obtaining their results, and their utility largely depends upon the knowledge of the practitioner as to the forces which he is employing. Innumerable successes prove the existence of the force; failures show that the manipulation of it was not skilful or could not evoke sufficient for the task in hand.

Expressed in general terms, thought is the manifestation of Creativeness, the Third Aspect of the human triplicity. In Christian terminology will is the manifestation of God the Father; love of God the Son; and thought, or creative activity, of God the Holy Ghost. For it is thought in us which acts, which creates, and carries out the decrees of the will. If the will is the King, thought is the Prime Minister.

The occultist applies this creative power to quicken human evolution. Eastern Yoga is the application of the general laws of the evolution of mind to this quickening of the evolution of a particular consciousness. It has been proved, and can ever be re-proved, that thought, concentrating itself attentively on any idea, builds that idea into the character of the thinker, and a man may thus create in himself any desired quality by sustained and attentive thinking –by meditation.

Knowing this law, a man can build his own mental body as he wishes it to be as certainly as a bricklayer can build a wall. The process of building character is as scientific as that of developing muscular power. Even death does not stop the work, as we shall see in later chapters.

In this work prayer may be used with great effect, perhaps the most striking instance being found in the life of the Brahman. The whole of that life is practically one continuous prayer. Though much more elaborate and detailed, it is somewhat similar to the form used in some Catholic convents where the novice is instructed to pray every time that he eats, that his soul may be nourished by the bread of life; every time he washes that his soul may be kept pure and clean; every time he enters a church, that his life may be one long service; and so on. The life of the Brahman is similar, except that his devotion is on a larger scale and is carried into much greater detail. No one can doubt that he who really and honestly obeys all these directions must be deeply and constantly affected by such action.

As we saw in Chapter IV, the mental body has this peculiarity, that it increases in size as well, of course, as in activity, as the man himself grows and develops. The physical body, as we know, has remained substantially the same size for long ages; the astral body grows to some extent; but the mental body [as well as the causal body] expands enormously in the later stages of evolution, manifesting the most gorgeous radiance of many-coloured lights glowing with intense splendour when at rest, and sending forth dazzling coruscations when in high activity.

In a very undeveloped person the mental body is even difficult to distinguish; it is so little evolved that some care is needed to see it at all. Large numbers of people are as yet incapable of clear thought, especially in the West with regard to religious matters. Everything is vague and nebulous. For occult development, vagueness and nebulosity will not do. Our conceptions must be clear-cut and our thought-images definite. These apart from other characteristics, are essentials in the life of the occultist.

The student should realise also that each man necessarily views the external world through the medium of his own mind. The result may be aptly compared to looking at a landscape through coloured glass. A man who has never seen except through red or blue glasses would be unconscious of the changes which these made on the true colours of the landscape. Similarly, a man is usually entirely unconscious of the distorting effect due to his seeing everything through the medium of his own mind. It is in this somewhat obvious sense that the mind has been called the "creator of illusion." The student of occultism clearly has the duty of so purifying and developing his mental body, eliminating "warts" [see p.31] and prejudices, so that his mental body reflects the truth with a minimum of distortion due to the defects of the mental body.

The effect of a man on animals is a matter which we should deal briefly in order to make complete our study of the mental body, its actions and reactions.

If a man turns affectionate thought upon an animal, or makes a distinct effort to teach him something, there is a direct and intentional action passing from the astral or mental body of the man to the corresponding vehicle of the animal. This is comparatively rare, the greater portion of the work done being without any direct volition on either side, simply by the incessant and inevitable action due to the proximity of the two entities concerned.

The character and type of the man will have a great influence on the destiny of the animal. If the interaction between them is mainly emotional, the probability is that the animal will develop mainly through his astral body, and that the final breaking of the link with the group-soul will be due to a sudden rush of affection which will reach the buddhic aspect of the monad floating above it, and thus cause the formation of the ego.

If the interaction is mainly mental, the nascent mental body of the animal will be stimulated,

and the animal will probably individualise through the mind.

If a man is intensely spiritual or of strong will, the animal will probably individualise through the stimulation of his will.

Individualisation through affection, intellect, and will are the three normal methods. It is also possible to individualise by less desirable means, eg., through pride, fear, hate, or lust for power.

Thus for example, a group of about two million egos individualised in the Seventh Round of the Moon Chain entirely through pride, possessing but little of any quality other than a certain cleverness, their causal bodies consequently showing almost no colour but orange.

The arrogance and unruliness of this group caused all through history constant trouble to themselves and to others. Some of them became the "Lords of the Dark Face" in Atlantis, others became world-devastating conquerors or unscrupulous millionaires, well called "Napoleons of finance".

Some of those who individualised through fear, engendered by cruelty, became the inquisitors of the —[page 110]—Middle Ages, and those who torture children at the present day.

Further details on the mechanisms of individualisation will be found in A Study of Consciousness, by Dr. Besant, pp. 172-3. It will also be dealt with in [The Causal Body](#).

CHAPTER XIV

FACULTIES

The mental body, like the astral body, can in process of time be aroused into activity, and will learn to respond to the vibrations of the matter of its own plane, thus opening up before the ego an entirely new and far wider world of knowledge and power.

The full development of consciousness in the mental body must not however, be confounded with merely learning to use the mental body to some extent. A man uses his mental body whenever he thinks, but that is very far from being able to utilise it as an independent vehicle through which consciousness can be fully expressed.

As we saw before [p. 20], the mental body of the average man is much less evolved than is his astral body. In the majority of men the higher portions of the mental body are as yet quite dormant, even when the lower portions are in vigorous activity. The mental body of an average man, in fact, is not yet in any true sense a vehicle at all, for the man cannot travel about in it nor can he employ its senses for the reception of impressions in the ordinary way.

Among the scientific men of our time, although the mental body will be very highly developed, yet this will be chiefly for use in the waking consciousness and very imperfectly as yet for direct reception on the higher planes.

Very few, apart from those who have been definitely trained by teachers belonging to the Great Brotherhood of Initiates, consciously work in the mental body; to be able to do so means years of practice in meditation and special effort.

Up to the time of the First Initiation, a man works at night in his astral body, but as soon as it is perfectly under control and he is able to use it fully, work in the mental world is begun. When the mental body is completely organised, it is a far more flexible vehicle than the astral body, and much that is impossible on the astral plane can be accomplished therein.

The power to function freely in the mental world must be acquired by the candidate for the Second Initiation because that Initiation takes place on the lower mental plane.

Just as the vision of the astral plane is different from that of physical plane, so is the vision of the mental plane totally different from either. In the case of mental vision, we can no longer speak of separate senses such as sight and hearing, but rather have to postulate one general sense which responds so fully to the vibrations reaching it that when any object comes within its cognition it at once comprehends it fully, and, as it were, sees it, hears it, feels it, and knows all there is to know about it, its cause, its effects, its possibilities, so far at least as the mental and lower planes are concerned, by the one instantaneous operation. There is never any doubt, hesitation, or delay about this direct action of the higher sense.

If he thinks of a place he is there; if of a friend, that friend is before him. No longer can misunderstandings arise, no longer can he be deceived or misled by any outward appearances, for every thought and feeling of his friend lies open as a book before him on that plane.

If the man is with a friend whose higher sense is also opened their intercourse is perfect beyond all earthly conception. For them distance and separation do not exist; their feelings are no longer hidden, or at best but half expressed by clumsy words; question and answer are unnecessary, for the thought-pictures are read as they are formed, and the interchange of ideas is as rapid as is their flashing into existence in the mind.

Yet even this wonderful faculty differs in degree only and not in kind from those which are at our command at the present time. For on the mental plane, just as —[page 113]—on the physical, impressions are still conveyed by means of vibrations travelling from the object seen to the seer. This condition does not apply on the buddhic plane; but with that we are not concerned in this book.

There is not very much that can or should be said regarding mental clairvoyance, because it is highly improbable that any example of it will be met with except among pupils properly trained

in some of the highest schools of occultism. For them it opens up a new world in which all that we can imagine of utmost glory and splendour is the commonplace of existence.

All that it has to give –all of it at least that he can assimilate –is within the reach of the trained pupil, but for the untrained clairvoyant to touch it is hardly more than a bare possibility. Probably not one in a thousand among ordinary clairvoyants ever reach it at all. It has been reached in mesmeric trance when the subject has slipped from the control of the operator, but the occurrence is exceedingly rare, as it needs almost superhuman qualifications in the way of lofty spiritual aspiration and absolute purity of thought and intention upon the part both of the subject and the operator. Even in such cases the subject has rarely brought back more than a faint recollection of an intense but indescribable bliss, generally deeply coloured by his personal religious convictions.

Not only is all knowledge –all, that is, which does not transcend the mental plane –available to those functioning on the mental plane, but the past of the world is as open to them as the present, for they have access to the indelible memory of nature [see Chapter XXVIII].

Thus for example, for one who can function freely in the mental body there are methods of getting at the meaning of a book quite apart from the process of reading it. The simplest is to read from the mind of one who has studied it; but this, of course, is open to the objection that one reaches only the student's conception of the book.

A second plan is to examine the aura of the book. Each book is surrounded by a thought – aura built up by the thoughts of all who have read and studied it. Thus the psychometrisation of a book generally yields a fairly full comprehension of its contents; though of course, there may be a considerable fringe of opinions held by the various readers but not expressed in the book itself.

As mentioned in Chapter VIII, in view of the fact that few readers at the present day seem to study so thoughtfully and thoroughly as did the men of old, the thought-forms connected with a modern book are rarely so precise and clear-cut as those which surround the manuscripts of the past.

A third plan is to go behind the book or manuscript altogether and touch the mind of the author, as described in Chapter X.

Yet a fourth method, requiring higher powers, is to psychometrise the subject of the book and visit mentally the thought-centre of that subject where all the streams of thought about the subject converge. This matter has been dealt with in Chapter XII on Thought-Centres.

In order to be able to make observations on the mental plane, it is necessary for a man very carefully to suspend his thought for a time, so that its creations may not influence the readily impressible matter around him, and thus alter entirely the conditions so far as he is concerned.

This holding the mind in suspense must not be confounded with the blankness of mind, towards the attainment of which so many Hatha Yoga practices are directed. In the latter case the mind is dulled down into absolute passivity, the condition closely approaching mediumship. In the former the mind is keenly alert and positive as it can be, holding its thought in suspense for the moment merely to prevent the intrusion of a personal equation into the observation which it wishes to make.

Chakrams, or Force-Centres, exist in the mental body just as they do in all the other vehicles. They are points of connection at which force flows from one vehicle to another. The chakrams in the etheric body have been described in the *Etheric Body*, p. 22, etc., and those in the astral body in *The Astral Body*, p. 31, etc. At present there is very little information available regarding the chakrams in the mental body.

One item of information is the following: In one type of person the chakram at the top of the head is bent or slanted until its vortex coincides with the atrophied organ known as the pineal gland, which is by people of this type vivified and made into a line of communication directly with the lower mental, without apparently passing through the intermediate astral plane in the ordinary way. It was for this type that Madame Blavatsky was writing when she laid such emphasis upon the awakening of that organ.

Another fact is that the faculty of magnification, called by the Hindus *anima*, belongs to the chakram between the eyebrows. From the centre portion of that chakram is projected what we may call a tiny microscope, having for its lens only one atom, thus providing an organ commensurate in size with the minute objects to be observed.

The atom employed may be either physical, astral or mental, but whichever it is it needs a special preparation. All its spirillae must be opened up and brought into full working order so that it is just as it will be in the seventh round of our chain.

The power belongs to the causal body, so if an atom of lower level be used as an eye-piece, a system of reflecting counterparts must be introduced. The atom can be adjusted to any sub-plane, so that any required degree of magnification can be applied in order to suit the object which is being examined.

A further extension of the power enables the operator to focus his consciousness in the lens, and then to project it to distant points.

The same power also, by a different arrangement, can be used for diminishing purposes when one wishes to view as a whole something far too large to be taken in at once by ordinary vision. This is known to the Hindus as *Mahima*.

There is no spatial limit to mental clairvoyance beyond that of the mental plane itself, which, as we shall see in Chapter XXVII, does not extend to the mental planes of other planets.

Nevertheless, it is possible by mental clairvoyance to obtain a good deal of information about other planets.

By passing outside of the constant disturbances of the earth's atmosphere, it is possible to make sight enormously clearer. It is also not difficult to learn how to put on an exceedingly high magnifying power, by means of which very interesting astronomical information may be gained.

Prana or Vitality exists on the mental plane, as it does on all planes of which we know anything. The same is true with regard to Kundalini or the Serpent-Fire, and also with regard to Fohat or electricity, and to the life-force referred to as The Etheric Double as the Primary Force.

Of Prana and Kundalini on the mental plane scarcely anything appears at present to be known. We know, however, that Kundalini vivifies all the various vehicles.

The Primary Force, mentioned above, is one of the expressions of the Second Outpouring from the Second Aspect of the Logos. On the Buddhic level it manifests itself as the Christ-principle in man; in the mental and astral bodies it vivifies various layers of matter, appearing in the higher part of the astral as a noble emotion, and in the lower part as a mere rush of life-force energising the matter of that body. In its lowest embodiment it is clothed in etheric matter, and rushes from the astral body into the chakrams in the surface of the etheric body, where it meets the kundalini which wells up from the interior of the human body.

The student will recollect [vide [The Etheric Double](#) p.44] that the stream of violet prana stimulates thought and emotion of a high spiritual type, ordinary thought being stimulated by the action of the blue stream mingled with part of the yellow; also that in some kinds of idiocy the flow of vitality to the brain, both yellow and blue-violet, is almost entirely inhibited.

Since [The Etheric Double](#) was published, C.W. Leadbeater's book The Chakras has appeared, containing some new and valuable information regarding the chakras, and particularly regarding the connection between the various centres or chakrams and the planes. The student therefore, may find the following tables useful:-

TABLE OF CHAKRAMS						
No.	English Name	Sanskrit	Situation	Spokes	Group	Forces with which associated
1	Roof or Basic	Mûlâdhâra	Base of Spine	4	- - Physiological	Kundalini
2	Spleen or Splenic	-----	Over Spleen	6		Prâna

3	Naval or Umbilical	Manipûra	Navel, over Solar Plexus	10	-II- Personal	Lower Astral
4	Heart or Cardiac	Anahata	Over Heart	12		High Astral
5	Throat or Laryngeal	Visuddha	Front of Throat	16		Lower Mental
6	Brow or Frontal	Âjnâ	Between Eyebrows	96	-III- Spiritual	Higher forces through pituitary body
7	Crown or Coronal	Sahasrâra	Top of Head	12 960		Higher forces through pineal gland

From the above it appears that the Primary Force, Prana and Kundalini, are not directly connected with man's mental and emotional life, but only with his bodily well being. There are, however, also other forces entering the chakrams which may be described as psychic and spiritual. The basal and splenic chakrams exhibit none of these, but the navel and higher chakrams are ports of entry for forces which affect human consciousness.

There seems to be a certain correspondence between the colours of the streams of prana which flow to the several chakrams and the colours assigned by H.P. Blavatsky to the principles of man in the diagram in The Secret Doctrine, Vol. III, p. 452, as shown in the following table.

Colours of Prâna	Chakrams entered	Colours given in Secret Doctrine	Principles represented
Light Blue	Throat	Blue	Âtmâ (auric envelope)
Yellow	Heart	Yellow	Buddhi

Dark Blue	Brow	Indigo or dark blue	Higher Manas
Green	Navel	Green	Kâma-Manas: lower mind
Rose	Spleen	Red	Kâma-Rûpa
Violet	Crown	Violet	Etheric Double
Violet - red (with another violet)	Root (afterwards to crown)	----	----

Kundalini belongs to the First Outpouring, coming from the Third Aspect. In the centre of the earth it operates in a vast globe, only the outer layers of which can be approached; these are in sympathetic relationship with the layers of Kundalini in the human body. Thus the Kundalini in the human body comes from what has been called the "laboratory of the Holy Ghost" deep down in the earth. It belongs to the fire of prana and vitality. Prana belongs to air and light and open spaces; the fire from below is much more material, like the fire in a red-hot iron. There is a rather terrible side to this tremendous force; it gives the impression of descending deeper and deeper into matter, of moving slowly but irresistibly onwards, with relentless certainty.

It should be noted that Kundalini is the power of the First Outpouring on its path of return and it works in intimate contact with the Primary Force already mentioned, and the two together bringing an evolving creature to the point where it can receive the Outpouring of the First Logos and become a human ego.

The premature unfoldment of Kundalini has many unpleasant possibilities. It intensifies everything in the man's nature, and it reaches the lower and evil qualities more readily than the good. In the mental body, for example, ambition is very readily aroused, and soon swells to an incredibly inordinate degree. It would be likely to bring with it a great intensification of the power of intellect, but at the same time it would produce abnormal and satanic pride, such as is quite inconceivable to the ordinary man. No uninstructed man should ever try to arouse it, and if such an one finds that it has been aroused by accident, he should at once consult someone who fully understands these matters. It has been said in the Hathayogapradipika [III. 107] : "It gives liberation to Yogis, and bondage to fools".

The conquest of Kundalini has to be repeated in each incarnation, since the vehicles are new each time, but after it has been thoroughly achieved its repetition will be an easy matter. It must be remembered that its action varies with different types of people; some for example, would see the higher self rather than hear its voice. Again, this connection with the higher has many stages; for the personality it means the influence of the ego, but for the ego it means the power of the monad, and for the monad in turn it means to become a conscious expression of the Logos.

In order to use the faculties of the mental body it is necessary, furthermore, to focus the consciousness in that body. The consciousness of man can be focussed only in one vehicle at a time, though he may be conscious through the others in a vague way. Thus, if a man possessed of astral and mental sight focuses his consciousness in the physical brain, he will see perfectly the physical bodies of his friends, but will at the same time see their astral and mental bodies somewhat dimly. In far less than a moment he can change that focus so that he will see the astral quite fully and perfectly; in that case he will still see the mental and physical bodies, but not in full detail. The same thing is true of the mental sight and of the sight of the higher planes.

In bringing down to the physical brain what has been seen on the mental plane, there has to be performed the difficult operation of a double transference from the higher to the lower, since the memory has to be brought through the intervening astral plane.

Even when the mental faculties can be used whilst awake in the physical body, the investigator is still hampered by the absolute incapacity of physical language to express what he sees.

In order to bring the consciousness of the mental body into the physical brain the links between the different bodies must be developed. These links exist at first without coming into the consciousness of the man and they are not actively vivified, being like what are called in the physical body rudimentary organs that are waiting to be developed by use. Such links connect the dense and etheric bodies with the astral, the astral with the mental body, the mental with the causal body. The action of the will begins to vivify them, and as they commence to function the man uses them for the passing of his consciousness from vehicle to vehicle. The use of the will vivifying the links sets free Kundalini the Serpent-Fire.

The link between the physical and the astral body is the pituitary body; that between the physical and the mental body is the pineal gland. As was mentioned before, some people develop the pituitary body first, some the pineal gland –each must follow the method prescribed by his own guru, or spiritual teacher.

When a man has learnt to leave the physical body in waking consciousness, having developed the links between his vehicles, he has, of course, bridged the gulf between physical life and sleep-life. The bridging of the gulf is facilitated by training the brain to respond to vibrations from the mental body; the brain then becomes more and more the obedient instrument of the man, carrying on its activities under impulses from the will and answering to the lightest touch.

The main preparations to be made for receiving in the physical vehicle the vibrations of the higher consciousness may usefully be summarised as follows: purification of the lower bodies by pure food and pure life; entire subjugation of the passions; the cultivation of an even, balanced temper and mind, unaffected by the turmoil and vicissitudes of external life; the habit of quiet meditation [see Chapters XV to XVII] on lofty topics; the cessation of hurry, especially

of that restless, excitable hurry of the mind, which keeps the brain continually at work flying from one thing to another; the genuine love for things of the higher world, so that the mind rests contentedly in their companionship, as in that of a well-loved friend.

When a man is able to use the mental faculties in ordinary waking consciousness he is, of course, able to receive impressions of every kind from the mental world, so that all the workings of others are sensed by him just as he sees their bodily movements. In learning to use the powers of the mental body, a man does not lose those of the lower, for they are included in the higher.

At this stage a man can also increase his powers of usefulness very largely by consciously creating and directing a thought-form, which he can use to do work in places to which, at the moment, it may not be convenient to travel in his mental body. These thought-forms he controls from a distance, watching and guiding them as they work, and making them the agents of his will.

When a man begins to develop along occult lines, the whole of the mental body, as said, must be purified and brought into thorough working order. It is eminently necessary that he should be able to make strong and clear thought-forms; in addition, it is a great help and comfort to him if he is able to visualise them clearly.

The two acts must not be confused. The formation of a thought is a direct action of the will, working through the mental body; visualisation is simply the power to see clairvoyantly the thought-form he has made. If a man thinks strongly of any object, the image of it is in his mental body just as much, whether he can visualise it or not.

The student must also continuously strive to maintain of moral purity and mental balance without which clairvoyance is a curse and not a blessing to its possessor.

Development of mental-body consciousness would make a man's life and memory continuous during the whole of each descent into incarnation.

When a man can thus function consciously in his mental body, experiencing its powers and its limitations, of necessity he also learns to distinguish between the vehicle he is using and himself. The next stage will be for him to perceive the illusory character of the personal "I", the "I" of the mental body, and to identify himself with the real man, the individuality or ego, living in the causal body.

This further step of raising the consciousness to the level of the ego on the higher mental plane, would confer on the man memory of all his past lives.

But before a man can hope to break the barrier between the mental and astral plane, so that he can have the pleasure of continuous recollection, he must have been for a long time thoroughly practised in the use of the mental body as a vehicle. [Analogy leads us to see that

the ego must have been fully conscious and active on his own plane for a long time before any knowledge of that existence can come through to the physical consciousness].

The mental body, as such, is incapable of fatigue; there is no such thing as fatigue of the mind. What we call by that name is only fatigue of the physical brain through which the mind has to express itself.

Nevertheless, purely physical fatigue can produce an effect upon the mental body. Thus a man who is utterly exhausted has to a large extent lost the power of co-ordination. Every physical cell is complaining, and the effect upon all vehicles –etheric, astral, and mental –is that a vast number of small, separate vortices are set up, each quivering at its own rate, so that all the bodies lose their cohesion and their power to do their work.

At the present state of our knowledge, the exact method by which ordinary memory works is not known, the subject not having been investigated. It is clear, however, that a vibration in the mental body is part of what occurs, and that the causal body is not in any way involved.

Many thousands of years ago, there appears to have been a certain ceremony, aimed at opening the faculties of the higher bodies. The officiant, in a dark room, uttered the word "Om", which brought all those present into close harmony with him, and with the feelings which filled his mind. At the utterance of the word "Bhur", the room was filled, to their senses, with ordinary light. On the sound of another word, astral sight was temporarily opened to them; another word similarly opened their mental sight. Such effects were temporary only, but on a future occasion it would, of course, be easier to produce the same result on those people.

It is important that the student should learn to distinguish between impulse and intuition. As both come to the brain from within, they seem at first exactly alike, and therefore, great care is necessary. It is wise, where circumstances permit, to wait awhile, because impulses usually grow weaker, while intuitions remain unaffected by the passage of time. An impulse is usually accompanied by excitement, and there is something personal about it; a true intuition, though decided, is surrounded by a sense of calm strength. The impulse is a surging of the astral body; an intuition is a scrap of knowledge from the ego impressed upon the personality, coming thus from the higher mental plane, or sometimes even from the buddhic.

To distinguish between the impulse and intuition, until the nature is thoroughly balanced, calm consideration is necessary and delay, as said above, is essential. An impulse dies away under such conditions, whilst an intuition grows clearer and stronger. Calmness and serenity enable the lower mind more clearly to hear the intuition and to feel its power. Intuition thus loses nothing, but rather gains from calm delay.

Furthermore, intuition is always connected with something unselfish. If there is any touch of selfishness, shown in some impulse coming from a higher plane, we may be sure that it is an astral impulse and not a true buddhic intuition.

Intuition, somewhat analogous to the direct vision of the physical plane, eventually takes the place of reason, which may be compared to the physical plane sense of touch. Intuition develops out of reasoning in the same sequential manner, and without change of essential nature, just as the eye develops out of the sense of touch.

But the intuition of the unintelligent is impulse, born of desire, and is lower, not higher, than reasoning.

CHAPTER XV

CONCENTRATION

From what we have already seen regarding the mechanism and the power of thought, it is abundantly clear that the control of the mind is of far greater importance than is ordinarily supposed, both for a man's own sake and also for its influence on the work he is able to do for others.

Thought-control, in fact, is an essential pre-requisite for the development of the powers of the soul.

In [The Voice of The Silence](#) it is stated: "The mind is the slayer of the real; let the disciple slay the slayer"" This does not, of course, mean that the mind must be destroyed, for one cannot get along without it, but that it must be dominated and mastered; it is not the man himself, but an instrument for him to train and use.

Obviously the student must exercise the greatest care as to the thoughts and emotions he permits himself to entertain. The ordinary man rarely thinks of attempting to check an emotion—except, perhaps, in its external manifestation; when he feels it surging within him, he yields himself to it, and considers it natural to do so. The occult student, however, must adopt quite a different attitude: instead of allowing his emotions to run away with him, he must take them absolutely under control; and this must be done by developing and controlling his mental body. One of the first steps towards this is the realisation that the mind is not himself, but an instrument which he must learn to use.

The student must thus set himself the task of mastering both his emotions and his mind; he must know exactly what he is thinking about, and why, so that he can use his mind, and turn it, or hold it still just as a practised swordsman turns his weapon where he will, in this direction or that, and is able to hold it as firmly as he wishes. In other words, he must acquire the power of concentration, which is a necessary preliminary to all mental work.

He must learn to think steadily and consecutively, not allowing the mind to run suddenly from one thing to another, nor to fritter away its energies over a large number of insignificant thoughts.

Most men find that all sorts of stray thoughts rush into their consciousness unbidden, and since they are quite unused to controlling the mind they are powerless to stem the torrent. Such people do not know what real concentrated thought is; and it is this utter lack of concentration, this feebleness of mind and will, that makes the early stages of occult development so difficult to the average man. Furthermore, since in the present state of the world there are likely to be more evil thoughts than good ones floating about, this weakness lays a man open to all sorts of temptations which a little care and effort might have avoided altogether.

On the form-side, to concentrate is to keep the mental body shaped in one steady image; on the life-side it is to direct the attention steadily to this form so as to reproduce it within oneself. It is the force of the will which compels the mind to remain in one form, shaped to one image, completely disregarding all other impressions thrown upon it.

More briefly, concentration consists in focussing the mind on one idea and holding it there.

Still more simply, concentration is paying attention. If a man pays attention to what he is doing, then his mind is concentrated.

The throat centre, or chakram, while associated with the higher forms of hearing, is also closely associated with the power of paying attention, to which great importance is always attached in all occult systems. Hence, in the school of Pythagoras, for example, the pupils were kept for several years in the order called Akoustikoi or Hearers, and were strictly forbidden to launch out upon the perilous waters of originality until they were thoroughly grounded in the established principles of philosophy. For similar reasons, in the mysteries of Mithra the lowest order was that of the Ravens, signifying that they were allowed to repeat only that which they had heard, precisely as a raven or parrot does. The Freemason will recognise the correspondence of these orders with the degree of E.A. in his system.

The s ... of the E.A., which incidentally calls to the assistance of the man who uses it a particular class of non-human intelligences of the subtle world, needs to be made correctly and at the proper place; if made carelessly and without thinking what is being done, a man may open himself to influences of which he is unaware, and for which he is unprepared. In using all such forms of "magic", a man should be on his guard lest he carelessly open himself to unpleasant influences which might otherwise have passed him by.

The student will also do well to remember that the natural effect of concentrating the mind is to produce tension in the muscles of the body as, for example, in the knitting of the brows. Such tension not only tires the body but also acts as an obstacle to the inflow of spiritual forces. The student should, therefore, periodically in his meditation, and also in his daily life, turn his

attention to his body and deliberately "relax". Experience will demonstrate the immense relief to the whole system which follows even a moment of complete relaxation.

People of strong and intense natures should pay special attention to relaxation, and may find it necessary to practise definite exercises with this end in view. Many books on the subject exist; *Power Through Repose*, by Annie Payson Call, can be confidently recommended as one of the best.

Concentration is not a matter of physical effort; the moment the mind turns to a thought it is concentrated on it. Concentration is less a matter of holding —page 128]—the mind by force on a certain thought than of letting the mind continue to rest on that thought in perfect stillness and quietude. The student must bear in mind that the seat of thought is not in the brain but in the mental body; hence concentration concerns the mental body more than the physical brain.

Concentration is thus obviously not a state of passivity, but, on the contrary, one of intense and regulated activity. It resembles, in the mental world, the gathering up of the muscles for a spring in the physical world, or their stiffening to meet a prolonged strain.

The man who is beginning real concentration of thought should not at first exceed five or ten minutes at a stretch, otherwise he is apt to overtax the brain. Very gradually the time may be lengthened to fifteen, twenty or thirty minutes.

The student should never practise concentration or meditation to the point of making a feeling of dullness and heaviness in the brain, for dullness and pain are danger signals, indicating that the effort is being made to change the matter of the bodies more rapidly than is consistent with health.

Most people appear to find it more difficult to bridle thought than emotion, probably because they have been brought up to consider it unseemly to allow emotion to disport itself unchecked, whereas they have usually allowed their thoughts to roam as fancy dictated.

When a man begins to attempt to control his mind, he thus finds himself in conflict with the past habits of his mental body. Just as the collective consciousness of his astral body forms what is termed the Desire-Elemental [see *Astral Body*, p. 77], so is there a Mental Elemental in his mental body. This Mental Elemental has thus become accustomed to have things all his own way, and to drift from subject to subject at his own sweet will.

The struggle with the mental Elemental is in some ways different from that which has been waged against the Desire-Elemental. The mental Elemental, being a whole stage earlier in evolution than the desire-Elemental, is less used to material confinement; consequently he is more active than the Desire-Elemental —more restless, but less powerful and determined.

In the nature of things, he is thus easier to manage, but less used to management; so that it takes far less actual exertion of strength to control a thought than a desire, but it needs a more

persistent application of that strength.

It must also be remembered that on the mental plane mind is on its own ground, and is dealing with its own matter, so that it is only a question of practice for it to learn to manage the Mental Elemental perfectly; whereas, when we endeavour to rule the Desire-Elemental we are bringing down the mind into a world which is foreign to it, and imposing an alien ascendancy from without.

So important are the last few facts stated that it may be useful to recapitulate them briefly. Control of mind is in itself far easier than control of the emotions; but we have had a certain amount of practice in emotional control, and as a rule almost no practice in mind control. Hence the mental exercise seems so difficult to us. Both of them together constitute a far easier task than the perfect mastery of the physical body; but this latter we have to some extent been practising during a number of previous lives, though our achievements along that line are even yet notably imperfect. A thorough comprehension of this matter should be distinctly encouraging to the student. One result of such comprehension should be vividly to impress upon him the truth of the remark in *The Voice of The Silence* that this earth is the only true hell which is known to the occultist.

Lest the above statements may seem untrue or exaggerated, let the student consider the difficulty of banishing, by thought-power, say, a raging toothache [though even this can be done under certain conditions] ; it is clearly much easier by thought-power to banish depression, anger, jealousy, or any other unpleasant emotion, and still easier to deflect the thought from an unpleasant or profitless subject to one more pleasing or useful, or even to stop the mind working altogether.

It will now be useful to consider more in detail the obstacles to concentration; these, as we shall see, divide themselves naturally into two main groups. The first has to do with Kama, or desire; the second with the very nature of mental matter itself.

The difficulty in the control of mind was well expressed 5,000 years ago by Arjuna in the immortal dialogue between him and Shri Krishna [see *Bhagavad Gita* VI, 34, 35]: -"This Yoga which Thou hast declared to be by equanimity, O slayer of Madhu, I see no stable foundation for it, owing to restlessness; for the mind is verily restless, O Krishna! It is impetuous, strong, and difficult to bend ; I deem it as hard to curb as the wind".

And still is true the answer, the answer pointing out the only way to success:-
"Without doubt, O mighty-armed, the mind is hard to curb; but it may be curbed by constant practice [abhyasa] and by indifference [vairagya] ".

We will take the two obstacles, the remedies for which are italicised above, in the reverse order.

[1] INDIFFERENCE –This reference is clearly to the power of kama, or desire, to attract, sway,

and hold the mind. In Chapter VI we studied in detail the relation between Kama and Manas, and saw the manner in which desire continually impels the mind and constantly makes it serve as a minister of pleasure.

Thus is the mind induced to seek that which pleases as well as to avoid that which gives pain. Hence it is only by curbing and mastering the emotions that they can be dominated and prevented from dragging the mind away from the task it has set itself to perform.

It is well that the student should remind himself that a chaos of petty emotions is unworthy of a rational being, and it is to the last degree undignified that man, who is a spark of the Divine, should allow himself to fall under the sway of his Desire-Elemental –a thing that is not even a mineral yet.

There would appear to be two principal ways in which this indifference can be attained and utilised as a means to concentration. These we may term [a] the Philosophical, and [b] the Devotional method.

[a] The Philosophical Method .This consists in so modifying and strengthening one's attitude towards everything that normally attracts and binds men that Kama or desire is brought completely under control; the man thus becomes indifferent to all objects, whether external, or as presented to the mind from within. This method, as observed by the present writer, seems to be difficult to most people of Western temperament, and often tends to create more perplexities than it solves' yet to people of Eastern temperament [to use a rough but useful distinction], it does not appear to present much difficulty.

To expound the method fully would necessitate a treatise on philosophy, which of course, is far beyond the cope of the present book. Let a few words suffice to give a general idea of the method. The philosophy of the system described in Discourses 5 and 6 of the Bhagavad Gita, which are called respectively the Yoga of Renunciation of Action and the Yoga of Self-Subdual.

Under this system the man "neither hateth nor desireth"; ...he is free from the pairs of opposites; ..he perceives that the senses move among the objects of sense...he places all actions in the Eternal, abandoning attachment; ...he mentally renounces all actions;...he looks equally on a Brahmana adorned with learning and humility, a cow, an elephant and even a dog and out-caste;...he neither rejoiceth on obtaining what is pleasant, nor sorroweth on obtaining what is unpleasant;...he is unattached to external contacts and findeth joy in the Self;.....he is able to endure...the force born from desire and passion...harmonised....happy...intent on the welfare of all beings...disjoined from desire and passion.

"He performeth such action as is duty, independently of the fruit of action...with the formative will renounced...controlled and peaceful,...uniform in cold and heat, pleasure and pain, as well as honour and dishonour; ...he regards impartially lovers, friends and foes, strangers, neutrals, foreigners and relatives, also the righteous and unrighteous;...he is free from hope and greed; ...he is free from longing for all desirable things;...he is as a lamp in a windless place; ...he is not shaken even by heavy sorrow;...he abandons without reserve all desire born of the

imagination;...little by little he gains tranquility...having made the mind abide in the SELF;...he seeth the SELF abiding in all beings, all beings in the Self; ...and he is...completely harmonised.

The above constitutes but a bare outline of what we have termed the philosophical method. The method may, in fact should be, modified and adapted, within very wide limits, to suit the particular individual and the peculiarities of his temperament.

The philosophical method, however, as already said, is for many a hard and perplexing path; as, therefore, "the dharma of another is full of danger", let such follow the second method, less drastic, now to be described.

[b] The Devotional Method: In this method, instead of attempting to eliminate Kama, i.e., desire or attachment, the student uses the very force of Kama to fix the mind. This is, par excellence, the method of the devotee, who cultivates Kama, in its highest form, to such a degree of intensity that all other attachments become relatively insignificant, and therefore powerless to disturb or distract his attention.

One who is of a devotional temperament may achieve his end by fixing his mind on a beloved object, or image, the very pleasure which he experiences from a contemplation of that image serving to hold the mind fixed upon it; even if the mind be forcibly dragged away from it, it will return to it again and again. In this way a devotee attains to a considerable degree of concentration.

Whilst the devotee thus utilises the element of attraction to a person, a more philosophically –minded person may take for his attractive image some profound idea, or even problem; thus, for him, the intellectual interest, the deep desire for knowledge, provides the binding power of attraction, and so fixes the mind immovably.

A useful definition of concentration, from this point of view, is as follows: the mental practice of concentration is control of mind, domination of mind by a mood, stamped upon it by the will, so that all the thinking will be bent on the purpose chosen.

For those who are not definitely devotional, the above method may be considerably modified; this modified method, in fact, is perhaps for most people the easiest of all, being, in fact, what one does in ordinary daily life. It consists in becoming so interested and absorbed in the subject selected that all other thoughts are ipso facto excluded from the mind. The mind should become so engrossed as to induce a state of more or less wrapt concentration. The student must learn to accomplish this at will, and will best succeed by cultivating the power and habit of observing and paying attention to outer objects.

An object should be taken, examined and studied minutely in many aspects. No object in nature is in reality dull or uninteresting; if anything seems so, it is rather the failure to

appreciate the wonder and beauty of its manifestation lies in our inattentiveness and lack of perception.

Some degree of mastery of the above relatively elementary exercise is necessary to successful visualisation –that is the power of mentally reproducing an object in accurate detail without it being visible to the eyes, and accurate visualisation is a necessary faculty in certain forms of occult work, such, for example, as ceremonial.

If instead, of a concrete object, an idea be chosen eg., a virtue, it should arouse the enthusiasm and devotion of the student, the concentration in this case being chiefly that of the feelings and less conspicuously that of the mind. It is easier to be one-pointed in feeling than in thought, for thought is more subtle and active; but if concentration of feeling can be induced the mind will to a certain extent follow suit.

In the practice of concentration, as well as of meditation, the beginner is apt to find that many little unsatisfied desires and un-thought-out problems, present hungry mouths ever calling aside the attention. To clear away these obstructions it is little use trying to repress or suppress them. A better plan is to give them their due, appoint them a time, and think them out. A mind cannot overcome such vacillation as leaves its problems perpetually unsettled cannot succeed in concentration, let alone meditation.

The student must decide to arbitrate his problems, abide by his own decisions, and then refuse to think the same matter over and over again. The ability to do this grows with practice and with the habit of putting decisions into action.

[2] CONSTANT PRACTICE : -The reference here seems to be the quality of restlessness, which is more or less inherent in mental matter, and in mental elemental essence. The elemental essence, in fact, is largely responsible for our wandering thoughts, as it darts constantly from one thing to another.

But as mental matter is subject to the laws of habit just as is all matter, it is possible to train it, by constant practice, until it becomes habitual for it to be the reverse of restless, and thus to fashion it into the willing and obedient servant of the real man, the Thinker.

The quickest and best way to overcome the wanderings of the mind is, of course, to use the will. Whatever method, in fact, be chosen, the will must be used to some extent. There are some people who rely solely on the force of the will [and there is no limit to the degree to which will may be developed], whilst others prefer to assist and supplement their will-power by philosophy, devotion, or by any other devices that they may be able to discover for themselves.

It is, of course, possible to make a shell around oneself, and thus exclude thoughts from outside; but this method is not recommended as a permanent plan, for shells after all are but crutches.

If, however, such a shell be employed, it must be recognised that it cannot prevent wandering thoughts from arising within the man's own mind; but it can prevent the intrusion from without of casual floating thoughts which have been left about by other people.

It is advisable that only the lower mental matter be employed in the making of such a shell, as otherwise helpful thought may be kept out, or the man's own thought might be hampered as he poured it forth towards his Master.

In Freemasonry, the corresponding process is that of Tying the Lodge, which is done of course, on the plane appropriate to the Degree which is being worked.

The power of concentration can, and should be, acquired in ordinary daily life. Whatever we are doing we should focus our whole attention upon it, do it with all our might, and as well as it can be done. A letter, for example, should be well and accurately written, no carelessness in detail being allowed to delay it or mar its effects. A book should be read with full attention, and effort to grasp the author's meaning. No day should pass without some definite exercise of the mind. For it is only by exercise that strength comes; disuse means always weakness and atrophy.

The mechanism of worry and the method of eliminating it should be grasped by the student. Work, unless excessive, does not injure the thought-apparatus, but, on the contrary, strengthens it. But the mental process of worry definitely injures it, and after a time produces nervous exhaustion and irritability, which render steady mental work impossible.

Worry is the process of repeating the same train of thought over and over again with small alterations, coming to no result, and often not even aiming at a result. It is the continued reproduction of thought-forms initiated by the mental body and the brain, not by the consciousness, and imposed by them on the consciousness.

The Thinker, having failed to solve his problem, remains unsatisfied; fear of anticipated trouble keeps him in an anxious and restless condition. Under this impulse, which is undirected by the Thinker, the mental body and brain continue to throw up images which have already been shaped and rejected. In worry, the Thinker is the slave instead of the master of his bodies.

Worry being largely due to automatism, the same property of matter can be utilised to overcome it. Perhaps the best way to get rid of a "worry channel" is to dig another of an exactly opposite character. This may be done by dwelling in meditation on such a thought as "The Self is Peace; that Self am I. The Self is Strength; that Self am I". As he thus broods, the Peace he is contemplating will enfold him, and he will be filled with the Strength he has pictured to himself in thought. The precise formulation of ideas for the meditation can of course, be suited to the particular individual.

The student must learn not only to think, but also to cease thinking at will. When the work of thought is over it should be dropped completely and not allowed to drift on vaguely, touching

the mind and leaving it, like a boat knocking itself against a rock. A man does not keep a machine running when it is not turning out work, needlessly wearing the machinery. Similarly, the priceless machinery of the mind should not be permitted to turn and turn aimlessly, wearing itself out without useful result. Just as tired limbs luxuriate in complete repose, so may the mind find comfort in complete rest.

When the student has finished his thought-work, he should drop the thought, and then as other thoughts appear in the mind, turn his attention away from them.

Another method, which the present writer employs with success, is not so much to turn the attention away [this itself being a positive act], as to take not interest in thoughts that arise. Let them come as they will, but be entirely indifferent to them. After a short time, no fresh life being infused into them, they cease to appear, and a complete stillness, entirely free from thought of any kind, is experienced, which is exceedingly restful, both to the astral and the mental bodies. [This plan may be used also to cure sleeplessness; the present writer has found it invaluable in many instances].

Cessation of thought is a necessary preliminary to work on the higher planes. When the brain has learned to be quiescent, then there opens the possibility of withdrawing the consciousness from its physical vesture.

The student will now be in a position to understand the full force of the aphorism of Patanjali that, for the practice of Yoga, the man must stop "the modifications of the thinking principle". The task to be achieved is to acquire such perfect control over the mental body, or "thinking principle", that it can be modified only with consent, deliberately given, of the man himself, the Thinker.

The term used by Patanjali in defining Yoga is –chitta-vritti-nirodha, which means restraint [nirodha], of the whirlpools [vritti] of the mind [chitta] .

A man must be able to take up and lay down the mind as one does a tool; when that stage is reached, then the possibility arises for the man to withdraw altogether from the mental body.

Yoga is thus the inhibition of all vibrations and changes in the mental body. Hence, in the mental body of a Master there is no change of colour save as initiated from within.

The colour of His mental body is as "moonlight on a rippling ocean". Within that whiteness lie all possibilities of colour, but nothing in the outer world can make the faintest change of hue sweep over its steady radiance. His mental body is merely and outer sheath that He uses when He needs to communicate with the lower world.

A result of concentration is that as the Knower, with concentrated mind, steadily contemplates the one image, he obtains a fuller knowledge of the object than he could obtain by means of any verbal description of it. The rough outline produced by the word-description of an object is

filled in more and more detail as the picture is shaped in the mental body, and the consciousness comes more and more into touch with the things described.

For further details of the theory and practice of concentration and thought-power, the student is referred to *Thought–Power, Its Control and Culture*, by Annie Besant; and for a practical manual on concentration, to Mr Ernest Wood's admirable book *Concentration*.

CHAPTER XVI

MEDITATION

Concentration is, of course, not an end in itself, but a means to an end. Concentration fashions the mind into an instrument which can be used at the will of the owner. When a concentrated mind is steadily directed to any object, with a view to piercing the veil and reaching the life, and drawing that life into union with the life to which the mind belongs –then meditation is performed. Concentration is thus the shaping of the organ; meditation is its exercise.

As we have seen, concentration means the firm fixing of the mind on one single point without wandering, and without yielding to any distractions caused by external objects, by the activity of the senses or by that of the mind itself. It must be braced up to an unswerving steadiness and fixity, until gradually it will learn so to withdraw its attention from the outer world and from the body that the senses will remain quiet and still, while the mind is intensely alive and all its energies drawn inwards, to be launched at a single point of thought, the highest to which it can attain. When it is able to hold itself thus with comparative ease it is ready for a further step, and by a strong but calm effort of the will it can throw itself beyond the highest thought it can reach, while working in the physical brain, and in that effort will rise to, and unite itself with, the higher consciousness, and find itself free of the body.

Thus anyone who is able to pay attention, to think steadily on one subject for a little time without letting the mind wander, is ready to begin meditation.

We may define meditation as the sustained attention of the concentrated mind in face of an object of devotion or a problem that needs illumination to be intelligible, of anything, in fact, whereof the life is to be realised and absorbed, rather than the form. It is the art of considering a subject or turning it over in the mind in its various bearings and relationships.

Another definition of meditation is that it consists of the endeavour to bring into the waking consciousness, that is, into the mind in its normal state of activity, some realisation of the super-consciousness, to create by the power of aspiration a channel through which the influence of the divine or spiritual principle –the real man –may irradiate the lower personality. It is the reaching out of the mind and feelings towards an ideal, and the opening of the doors of the imprisoned lower consciousness to the influence of the ideal. "Meditation", said H.P.

Blavatsky, "is the inexpressible longing of the inner man for the Infinite". St. Alphonsus de 'Liguori spoke of meditation as : "the blessed furnace in which souls are inflamed with Divine Love."

The ideal chosen may be abstract, such as a virtue; it may be the Divinity in man; it may be personified as a Master of Divine teacher. But in all cases it is essentially an uplifting of the soul towards its divine source, the desire of the individual self to become one with the Universal Self.

What food is to the physical life, so is meditation to the spiritual life. The man of meditation is ever the most effective man of the world. Lord Rosebery, speaking of Cromwell, described him as a "practical mystic", and declared that a practical mystic is the greatest force in the world. The concentrated intellect, the power of withdrawing outside the turmoil, means immensely increased energy in work, more steadiness, self-control, serenity. The man of meditation is the man who wastes not time, scatters no energy, misses no opportunity. Such a man governs events, because within him is the power whereof events are only the outer expression; he shares the divine life, and therefore shares the divine power.

As was said before, when the mind is kept shaped to one image, and the Knower steadily contemplates it, he obtains a far fuller knowledge of the object than he could obtain by means of any verbal description of it. As concentration is performed, the picture is shaped in the mental body, and concentration on rough out-line, derived from, say, a verbal description, fills in more and more detail, as the consciousness comes more closely in touch with the things described.

All religions recommend meditation, and its desirability has been recognised by every school of philosophy. Just as a man who wishes to be strong uses prescribed exercises to develop his muscles, so the student of occultism uses definite and prescribed exercises to develop his astral and mental bodies.

There are, of course, many kinds of meditation, just as there are many types of men: it is clearly not possible that one method of meditation which is most suited to him.

Meditation has many objects, of which the principal ones are as follows:

[1] It ensures that at least once a day a man shall think of high and holy things, his thoughts being taken away from the petty round of daily life, from its frivolities and its troubles.

[2] it accustoms the man to think of such matter, so that after a time they form a background to his daily life, to which his mind returns with pleasure when it is released from the immediate demands of his business.

[3] It serves as a kind of astral and mental gymnastics, to preserve these higher bodies in health and to keep the stream of divine life flowing through them. For these purposes it should be remembered that the regularity of the exercises is of the first importance.

[4] it may be used to develop character, to build into it various qualities and virtues.

[5] It raises the consciousness to higher levels, so as to include the higher and subtler things;

through it a man may rise to the presence of the Divine.

[6] it opens the nature and calls down blessings from higher planes.

[7] It is the way, even though it be only the first halting step upon the way, which leads to higher development and wider knowledge, to the attainment of clairvoyance, and eventually to the higher life beyond this physical world altogether.

Meditation is the readiest and safest method of developing the higher consciousness. It is unquestionably possible for any man in process of time, by meditation, say, upon the Logos or the Master, to raise himself first to the astral and then to the mental levels; but of course, none can say how long it will take, as that depends entirely upon the past of the student and the efforts he makes.

A man occupied in the earnest study of higher things is for the time lifted entirely out of himself, and generates a powerful thought-form in the mental world, which is immediately employed as a channel by the force hovering in the world next above.

When a body of men join together in thought of this nature, the channel which they make is out of all proportion larger in its capacity than the sum of their separate channels. Such a body of men is, therefore, an inestimable blessing to the community amidst which it works.

In their intellectual studies they may be the cause of an outpouring into the lower mental world of force which is normally peculiar to the higher mental.

If their thought deals with ethics and soul-development in its higher aspects, they may make a channel of more elevated thought through which the force of the buddhic world may descend into the mental.

They are thus able to cause influence to be radiated out upon many a person who would not be in the least open to the action of that force if it had remained on its original level.

This, in fact, is the real and greatest function of, for example, a Lodge of the Theosophical Society—to furnish a channel for the distribution of the Divine Life. For every Lodge of the Theosophical Society is a centre of interest to the Masters of the Wisdom and Their pupils; consequently the thoughts of the members of the Lodge, when engaged in study, discussion, etc., may attract the attention of the Masters, a force being then poured out far more exalted than anything deriving from the members themselves.

Members of the Theosophical Society may be reminded that it has been stated by Dr. Besant that a Master has said that when a person joins the Society he is connected with Them by a tiny thread of life. This thread is the line of magnetic rapport with the Master, and the student may by arduous effort, by devotion and unselfish service, strengthen and enlarge the thread until it becomes a line of living light.

It is possible to call down a blessing from a still higher source. The Life and Light of the Deity

flood the whole of His system, the force at each level or plane being normally strictly limited to it. If, however, a special channel be prepared for it, it can descend to, and illuminate a lower level.

Such a channel is always provided whenever any thought or feeling has an entirely unselfish aspect. Selfish feeling moves in a closed curve, and so brings its own response on its own level. An utterly unselfish emotion is an outrush of energy which does not return, but in its upward movement provides a channel for a downpouring of divine Power from the level next above. This is the reality lying at the back of an idea of the answer to prayer.

To a clairvoyant this channel is visible as a great vortex, a kind of gigantic cylinder or funnel. This is the nearest explanation that can be given in the physical world, but it is inadequate, because as the force flows down through the channel it somehow makes itself one with the vortex, and issues from it coloured by it and bearing with it, distinctive characteristics which show through what channel it has come.

By meditation a man's astral and mental bodies gradually come out of chaos into order, slowly expand and gradually learn to respond to higher and higher vibrations. Each effort helps to thin the veil that divides him from the higher world and direct knowledge. His thought-forms grow day by day more definite, so that the life poured into them from above becomes fuller and fuller.

Meditation thus helps to build into the bodies the higher types of matter. It often leads to lofty emotions being experienced, these coming from the buddhic level and being reflected in the astral body. In addition, there is needed also development of the mental and causal bodies, in order to give steadiness and balance; otherwise fine emotions which sway the man in the right direction may very readily become a little twisted and sway him along other and less desirable lines. With feeling alone perfect balance or steadiness can never be obtained. The directing power of mind and will is needed as well as the motive force of emotion.

In practising meditation the student may find useful a knowledge of the five stages of mind as expounded by Patanjali. He should recollect, however, that these stages are not confined to the mental plane, but exist, in appropriate form, on every plane. They are:-

[1] Kshipta: the butterfly mind, which darts constantly from one object to another. It corresponds to activity on the physical plane.

[2] Mudha: the confused stage in which the man is swayed and bewildered by emotions; it corresponds to activity in the astral world.

[3] Vikshipta: the state of pre-occupation or infatuation by an idea; the man is possessed, we might say obsessed, by an idea. This corresponds to activity in the lower mental world. The man should learn Viveka [see p. 294], which has to do with the Cognitive aspect of consciousness.

[4] Ekagrata: one-pointedness; the state of possessing an idea, instead of being possessed by it. This corresponds to activity on the higher mental plane. The man should here learn Vairagya [see p. 295], which has to do with the Activity aspect of consciousness.

[5] Niruddha: self-control; rising above all ideas, the man chooses as he wills according to his illumined Will. This corresponds to activity on the buddhic plane. The man should here learn Shatsampatti [see p. 294], which has to do with the Will aspect of consciousness.

When complete control has been acquired, so that the man can inhibit all motions of the mind, then he is ready for Samadhi, corresponding to Contemplation, with which we shall deal more fully in our next chapter. Meanwhile, for the sake of completeness, it is desirable to give here a preliminary idea of Samadhi.

Etymologically Samadhi means "fully placing together", and may therefore be rendered into English as "com-posing the mind", i.e., collecting it all together, checking all distractions. "Yoga", says Vyasa, "is the composed mind". This is the original meaning of Samadhi, though it is more often used to denote the trance state, which is the natural result of perfect composure.

Samadhi is of two kinds: [1] Samprajnata Samadhi, i.e., Samadhi with consciousness, with consciousness turned outwards towards objects; [2] Asamprajnata Samadhi, i.e., Samadhi without consciousness, with consciousness turned inwards, withdrawn into itself so that it passes into the next higher vehicle.

For convenience of reference these facts are set out in tabular form on page 146.

The student may also like to have a brief enumeration of the Four States of Mind spoken of in Yoga. They are:

- [1] Jagrat : waking consciousness
- [2] Svapna : dream consciousness; consciousness working in the astral body and able to impress its experiences upon the brain.
- [3] Sushupti : deep-sleep consciousness, working in the mental body, and not able to impress its experiences on the physical brain.
- [4] Turiya : trance consciousness, so far separated from the brain that it cannot readily be recalled by outer means.

No.	Stages of Mind		Quality to be acquired	Aspect of Consciousness
	Sanskrit	English		
1	Kshipta	Butterfly-mindedness	-----	-----

2	Mûdha	Confusion		
3	Vikshipta	Infatuation	Viveka (discrimination)	Cognition
4	Ekâgrata	One-pointedness	Vairâgya (dispassion)	Activity
5	Niruddha	Self-control	Shatsampatti (6-fold mental qualifications)	Will
6	Samâdhi	Composure of mind, leading to trance	-----	-----

It is important to note, however, that these four states of consciousness exist on every plane. The following gives examples of the four states in physical consciousness, and is arranged in tabular form for the sake of compactness and clarity:

THE FOUR STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS			
SANSKRIT	ENGLISH	Examples in physical consciousness	
Jâgrat	Waking	To read a book	To look at a watch
Svapna	Dream	To perceive the meaning of the words	To imagine the watch
Sushupti	Deep Sleep	To touch the mind of the writer	To conceive the ideal watch
Turiya	Trance	To enter the mind of the writer	To pass to the idea of time in the abstract

It should also be noted that the terms are relative; thus, for most people, Jagrat, or waking consciousness, is that part of the total consciousness which is functioning in the brain and nervous system, and which is definitely self-conscious. We may think of consciousness as a great egg of light, of which one end only is inserted into the brain; that end is the waking consciousness.

But, as self-consciousness is developed in the astral world, and the brain develops sufficiently to answer to its vibrations, astral consciousness becomes a part of the waking consciousness; the mental consciousness would then be the svapna, or dream-consciousness.

Similarly, when mental self-consciousness is developed, and the brain answers to it, the waking consciousness includes the mental. And so on, until all the consciousness on the five planes is included in the waking consciousness.

This enlarging of waking-consciousness involves development in the atoms of the brain as well as the development of certain organs in the brain, and of the connections between the cells.

For the inclusion of astral self-consciousness the pituitary body must be developed, and the fourth set of spirillae in the atoms must be perfected.

For the inclusion of mental self-consciousness the pineal gland must be active, and the fifth set of spirillae in thorough working order.

If these physical developments are not achieved, then the astral and mental consciousness remain super-consciousness, and are not expressed through the brain.

Again, if a man possesses no physical body, then his jagrat or waking consciousness is his astral consciousness. Thus a wider definition of jagrat would be that it is that part of the total consciousness which is working through its outermost vehicle.

We may also reconsider, from the point of view of the above analysis, Samadhi. Samadhi is a state of consciousness in which the body is insensible, but the mind is fully self-conscious, and from which the mind returns to the physical brain with the memory of its super-physical experiences.

If a man throws himself into a trance, and is active on the astral plane, then his Samadhi is on the astral. If he functions on the mental plane, then his Samadhi is on that plane.

The man who can practise Samadhi can thus withdraw from the physical body so as to leave it insensitive while his mind is fully conscious.

Samadhi is therefore a relative term. Thus a master begins His Samadhi on the plane of atma, and rises thence to the higher cosmic planes.

The word Samadhi is also sometimes used to denote the condition just beyond the level where a man can retain consciousness. Thus, for a savage whose consciousness is clear only on the physical plane, the astral plane would be Samadhi. It means that when the man comes back to his lower vehicles he would bring with him no definite additional knowledge and no new power of doing anything of use. This kind of Samadhi, is not encouraged in the highest schools of occultism.

Going to sleep and going into Samadhi are largely the same process ; but while one is due to ordinary conditions and has no significance, the other is due to the action of the trained will and is a priceless power.

Physical means of inducing trance, such as hypnotism, drugs, staring at a black spot on a white ground, or at the point of the nose, and other similar practices, belong to the method of Hatha Yoga, and are never employed in Raja Yoga.

To a clairvoyant, the difference between a mesmerised subject and the self-induced trance of a Yogi is at once apparent. In the mesmerised or hypnotised subject all the "principles" are present, the higher manas paralysed, buddhi severed from it through that paralysis, and the astral body entirely subjected to lower manas and kama.

In the yogi on the other hand, the "principles" of the lower quaternary disappear entirely, except for hardly perceptible vibrations of the golden-hued prana and a violet flame streaked with gold rushing upwards from the head and culminating in a point.

The mesmerised or hypnotised person recollects in his brain nothing of his experiences; the yogi remembers everything that has happened to him.

A few practical examples will perhaps best illustrate some of the methods employed in meditation.

The student will do well to commence by cultivating the thought, until it becomes habitual, that the physical body is an instrument of the spirit. He should think of the physical body, how it is possible to control and direct it, and then should separate himself in thought from it, repudiate it, in fact.

Next, perceiving that he can control his emotions and desires, he should repudiate the astral body, with its desires and emotions; then, picturing himself as in the mental body, and again reflecting that he can control and direct his thoughts, he should repudiate his mind, and should then let himself soar into the free atmosphere of the spirit where is eternal peace; resting there for a moment, let him strive with great intensity to realise that That is the real Self.

Descending again in consciousness, he should endeavour to carry with him the peace of the spirit into his different bodies.

Another exercise would be to direct the meditation to character-building, selecting for the purpose a virtue, let us say harmlessness. The attention having been concentrated, the subject is thought about in its many aspect; eg., harmlessness is act, in speech, in thought, in desire; how harmlessness would be expressed in the life of the ideal man; how it would affect his daily life; how he would treat people if he had fully acquired the virtue, and so forth.

Having thus meditated upon harmlessness, he would carry with him into the daily life a state of mind that would soon express itself in all his action and thoughts. Other qualities could, of course, be similarly treated. A few months of earnest effort along these lines would produce wonderful changes in a man's life, as described in the memorable words of Plotinus. "Withdraw

into yourself and look. And if you do not find yourself beautiful as yet, do as does the creator of a statue that is to be made beautiful; he cuts away here, he smoothes there, he makes the line lighter, this other purer, until he has shown a beautiful face upon the statue. So do you also; cut away all that is excessive, straighten all that is crooked, bring light to all that is shadowed, labour to make all glow with beauty, and do not cease chiseling your statue until there shall shine out on you the godlike splendour of virtue, until you shall see the final goodness surely established in the stainless shrine". [Plotinus on the Beautiful, translated by Stephen Mackenna].

Meditation upon a virtue thus causes a man gradually to grow into the possession of that virtue ; as finely said in the Hindu Scriptures : "What a man thinks on, that he becomes; therefore think on the Eternal". And again : "Man is the creation of thought".

An excellent example of what may be done in this manner by meditation is that of a certain man who for forty years meditated daily upon truth; the effect was that he so tuned himself to the mode of truth that he always knew when a man was lying by the jar that he felt in himself. It so happened that the man was a judge, so that his faculty must have stood him in good stead.

In this work a man is employing his imagination – the great tool used in Yoga. If a man imagines in his thought that he has a certain quality, he is half way to possessing that quality; if he imagines himself free from a certain failing, he is half way to being free from that failing. So powerful a weapon is a trained imagination that a man may by its use rid himself of half his troubles and his faults.

It is not wise to brood over faults, as it tends to encourage morbidness and depression which act as a wall, shutting out spiritual influences. In practice it is better to ignore faults of disposition so far as may be done, and to concentrate on building the opposite virtues. Success in the spiritual life is gained less by fierce wrestling with the lower nature than by growing into the knowledge and appreciation of higher things. For once we have sufficiently experienced the bliss and joyousness of the higher life, by contrast the lower desires pale and lose their attractiveness. It was said by a great Teacher that the best form of repentance for a transgression was to look ahead with hopeful courage, coupled with the firm resolve not to commit the transgression again.

Next, suppose the purpose of the meditation is to be intellectual understanding of an object, and the relation of it to other objects.

It is important for the student to recollect that the first work of the Knower is to observe –accurately, for on the accuracy of the observation depends the thought; if the observation is inaccurate, then out of that initial error will spring a number of consequent errors that nothing can put right save going back to the very beginning.

The object having thus been carefully observed, the stream of thought is played upon it so as

to grasp it in all its natural, super-physical and metaphysical aspects, an effort being made to make quite clear and definite that level of the consciousness which is still nebular.

Let the subject be, for example, harmony. Consider it in relation to the various senses; consider it in music, in colour, in phenomena of many different kinds; seek to discover the principal features of harmony, and how it differs from other similar and contrasting ideas; what part it plays in the succession of events; what is its use; what results from its absence. Having answered all these, and many other questions, an endeavour should be made to drop all concrete images or thoughts, and to hold in thought the abstract idea of harmony.

The student must bear in mind that mental sight is quite as real and satisfying as is physical sight. Thus it is possible to train the mind to see, say, the idea of harmony, or the square root of two, as clearly and as certainly as one sees a tree or a table with physical vision.

For our third example let us take a devotional meditation. Think of the ideal man, the Master, or, if preferred, the deity, or any manifestation of the deity. Allow the thought to play upon the subject from different aspects, so that it constantly awakens admiration, gratitude, reverence, worship. Ponder upon all the qualities manifested in the subject and take each quality in all its aspects and relationships.

From a general standpoint, an abstract ideal and a personality are equally good for purposes of meditation. A person of intellectual temperament will usually find the abstract ideal the more satisfactory; one of the emotional temperament will demand a concrete embodiment of his thought. The disadvantage of the abstract ideal is that it is apt to fail in compelling aspiration; the disadvantage of the concrete embodiment is that the embodiment is apt to fall below the ideal.

We may here take especial notice of the result of meditating on the Master, this makes a definite link with the Master, which shows itself to the clairvoyant vision as a kind of line of light. The Master always subconsciously feels the impinging of such a line and sends out along it in response a steady stream of magnetism which continues to play long after the meditation is over.

If a picture is used for purposes of meditation, it may often be observed to change in expression. This is because the will can be trained to act directly upon physical matter, the actual physical particles being unquestionably affected by the power of strong sustained thought.

One other form of meditation may be given, viz., that of mantric meditation.

A mantram is a definite succession of sounds arranged by an occultist in order to bring about certain definite results. Those sounds, repeated rhythmically over and over again in succession, synchronise the vibrations of the vehicles into unity with themselves. A mantram is

thus a mechanical way of checking vibrations, or inducing the vibrations that are desired. Its efficacy depends upon what is known as sympathetic vibration [vide *The Astral Body*, pp. 157-8].

The more a mantram is repeated, the more powerful the result. Hence the value of repetition in Church formulae, and of the rosary, which enables the consciousness to be fully concentrated on what is being said and thought, undistracted by the task of keeping count.

In this method of meditation, practised largely in India, the devotee directs his mind, say, to Shri Krishna, the incarnate God, the Spirit of Love and Knowledge in the world. A sentence is taken and chanted over and over again as a mantram, while its deep and varied meaning is intently pondered upon. Thus the devotee brings himself in touch with the Great Lord Himself.

The above constitutes the briefest outline of certain forms of meditation. For further description and detail the student is referred to that excellent manual *Concentration* by Ernest Wood, to [Meditation For Beginners](#) by J.I. Wedgwood, and to the admirable chapters on Thought-Control and on Building of Character in *The Outer Court*, by Dr. Besant.

An excellent "Ego Meditation" is given in *Gods In Exile*, by J.J. van der Leeuw, LL.D., in the Afterword at the end of that admirable little book.

Many people meditate daily alone, with success; but there are even greater possibilities when a group of people concentrate their minds on the one thing. That sets up a strain in the physical ether as well as in the astral and mental worlds, and it is a twist in the direction which we desire. Thus, instead of having to fight against our surroundings, as is usually the case, we find them actually helpful, provided of course, that all present succeed in holding their minds from wandering. A wandering mind in such a group constitutes a break in the current, so that instead of there being a huge mass of thought moving in one mighty flood, there would be eddies in it, like rocks which deflect the water in a river.

A striking example of the tremendous power of collective meditation and thought was that of the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria. C.W. Leadbeater describes that occasion as one of the most wonderful manifestations of occult force that he ever saw. The crowd became so exalted that people were lifted right out of themselves by their emotions, thus experiencing a tremendous uplift of soul. A similar effect, on a small scale, can be produced by group meditation.

We will now consider the physical adjuncts of meditation. In meditation, posture is not unimportant. The body should be put into a comfortable position, and then forgotten. If it is uncomfortable, it cannot be forgotten, as it would constantly call attention to itself.

Furthermore, just as certain thoughts and emotions tend to express themselves in characteristic movements and gestures of the body, so, by a reversal of the process, positions

of the body may tend to induce states of mind and feeling, and so assist the student in dwelling on them.

The majority of Western people will find it most comfortable to sit in an armchair, the back of which does not slope unduly; the hands may be clasped and rest on the legs, or be laid lightly on the knees. The feet may be placed together or crossed with the right over the left. This locking of the extremities of the body helps to prevent the outflow of magnetism from the fingertips, feet, etc.

The position should be easy and relaxed, the head not sunken upon the chest but lightly balanced; the eyes and mouth closed, the spinal column [along which there is much magnetic flow] erect.

Eastern people usually sit cross-legged on the floor or a low stool, a position which is said to be slightly more effectual since any magnetism liberated tends to rise around the body in a protective shell.

Another factor to be considered in determining the posture for meditation is the possibility of losing physical consciousness. The Indian who is sitting on the floor simply falls backwards without hurting the body; those who meditate in a chair will do well to make use of an armchair so that, in the event of the body losing consciousness, they may not fall out of it.

Except in very rare cases the lying-down position should not be adopted, on account of its natural tendency towards sleep.

A cold bath or a brisk walk beforehand is useful in order to overcome any tendency to sluggish circulation of the blood, which is obviously detrimental to brain activity.

There is an intimate connection between profound meditation and breathing. It is found in practice that as the body becomes harmonised in meditation the breathing grows deeper, regular and rhythmic, until by degrees it becomes so slow and quiet as to be almost imperceptible. Hatha Yoga reverses the process, and by deliberate regulation of the breathing seeks to harmonise the functions of the body, and finally, the workings of the mind.

The student, however, should be warned against the indiscriminate practice of breathing exercises; he will be far better advised to learn to control of thought along the lines of Raja Yoga, leaving his efforts at meditation to work their natural effect on the physical body.

Whilst some breathing exercises are exceedingly dangerous, there is no objection to simple, deep breathing provided undue strain is not placed upon the heart and lungs, and no attempt is made to concentrate the thought on the various centres, or chakrams, of the body.

Good incense is also helpful, as it tends to purify the "atmosphere" from the occult standpoint. The student may also gain assistance from beautiful colours, flowers and pictures in his

surroundings, and other means of uplifting the mind and feelings.

He will also find it useful to observe certain dietetic restrictions [vide *The Astral Body*. p. 65] and, if it can be done without detriment to health, to abstain from flesh-food and alcohol.

If alcohol is taken, meditation is apt to set up inflammatory symptoms in the brain affecting particularly the pituitary body [vide *The Astral Body*, p. 66].

Early morning is probably the most suitable time for meditation because desires and emotions are usually more tranquil after sleep and before the man plunges into the bustle of the world. But whatever time is chosen it should be when there is assurance of being undisturbed. Moreover, as already pointed out, it should always be at the same time, for regularity is of the essence of the prescription.

The times selected by ancient devotees were sunrise, noon and sunset, these being magnetically the most suitable. It is well to cultivate the habit of turning the mind for a moment at the stroke of every hour during the day to the realisation of oneself as the Spiritual Man. This practice leads to what Christian Mystics called "self-recollectedness", and helps the student to train his mind to revert automatically to spiritual thoughts.

It is not well to meditate immediately after a meal, for the obvious reason that it tends to draw blood away from the digestive organs; neither is meditation at night good, because the bodies are tired and the etheric double is more readily displaceable; in addition, the negative influence of the moon is then operative, so that undesirable results are more liable to occur.

Sometimes meditation may be less successful than usual because of unfavourable astral or mental influences.

It is stated also by some people that at certain times the planetary influences are more favourable than at others. Thus an astrologer has said that when Jupiter had certain relations with the moon this had the effect of expanding the etheric atmosphere and making meditation appear more successful. Certain aspects with Saturn, on the other hand, were said to congest the etheric atmosphere, making meditation difficult.

The system of meditation briefly outlined above has as its object spiritual, mental and ethical development, and control of the mind and feelings. It does not aim at developing psychic faculties "from below upwards"; but its natural result may be to open up a form of intuitive psychism in persons of sufficiently sensitive organisation, which will show itself in increasing sensitiveness to the influence of people and places, in the recalling of fragmentary memories of astral plane experiences in sleep, in greater susceptibility to direct guidance from the ego, in the power to recognise the influence of the Masters and spiritually developed people, and so forth.

Meditation may result in illumination, which may be one of three quite different things:

[1] By intense and careful thinking over a subject a man may himself arrive at some conclusion with respect to it;

[2] he may obtain illumination from his higher self, discovering what his ego really thinks on his own plane about the question;

[3] he may, if highly developed, come into touch with Masters or devas. It is in [1] only that his conclusions would be likely to be vitiated by his own thought-forms; the higher self would be able to transcend these, and so would a Master or a deva.

What we can do in meditation depends upon what we are doing all day long. If we have prejudices, for example, in ordinary life, we cannot escape from them in meditation.

Physical meditation is, of course, for the training of the lower vehicles, not for the ego. During meditation the ego regards the personality much as at any other time—he is usually slightly contemptuous.

If the ego is at all developed he will meditate upon his own level, but that meditation need not, of course, synchronise with that of the personality.

Meditation is one means of acquiring the art of leaving the body in full consciousness. The consciousness being braced up to an unswerving steadiness and fixity, the attention is gradually withdrawn from the outer world and the body, the senses remaining quiet—[page 158]—while the mind is intensely alive, but with all its energies drawn inwards ready to be launched at a single point of thought, the highest to which it can attain. When it is able to hold itself thus with comparative ease by a strong but calm effort of will, it can throw itself beyond the highest thought it can reach while working in the physical brain, and in that effort will rise to, and unite itself with, the higher consciousness and find itself free from the body. When this is done there is no sense of sleep or dream nor any loss of consciousness; the man finds himself outside his body, as though he had slipped off a weighty encumbrance, not as though he had lost any part of himself.

There are other ways of obtaining freedom from the body; for example, by the rapt intensity of devotion, or by special methods that may be imparted by a great teacher to his pupil.

The man can return to his body and re-enter it at will; also, under these circumstances he can impress on the brain, and thus retain while in the physical body, the memory of the experiences he has undergone.

Real meditation means a strenuous effort, not the sensation of happiness which arises from a state of semi-somnolence and bodily luxury. It has, therefore, nothing to do with, and, in fact, is quite different from, the kind of passive mediumship developed in spiritualism.

The student need not be puzzled by the injunction that he should open himself to spiritual influences and at the same time be positive. Positive effort is needed as a preliminary; this

uplifts the consciousness the higher levels so that the higher influences can play down; then, and only then, is it safe to relax the upward striving in the realisation of the peace thus attained. The phrase "opening oneself to spiritual influences" may be taken to mean maintaining an attitude of intense stillness at a high spiritual level, much as a bird, though seemingly passive and immobile, poises itself against the gale by a powerful effort continuously maintained in wing and pinion.

CHAPTER XVII

CONTEMPLATION

CONTEMPLATION is the third of the three stages, of which we have already considered two. The three are :

[1] Concentration –The riveting of the attention on an object.

[2] Meditation –The stirring of the consciousness into activity with reference to that object alone; looking at the object in every possible light, and trying to penetrate its meaning, to reach a new and deep thought or receive some intuitional light upon it.

[3] Contemplation –The active centring of the consciousness on the object, while the lower activities of the consciousness are successfully repressed; the fixation of the attention for a time on the light received. It has been defined as concentration at the top of the line of thought or meditation.

In the Hindu terminology the stages are amplified and named as follows:

[1] Prâtyâhara : the preliminary stage, embracing entire control of the senses.

[2] Dhâranâ : concentration.

[3] Dhyâna : meditation.

[4] Samadhi : contemplation.

Dhâranâ, Dhyâna and Samadhi are known collectively as Sannyama.

In meditation we discover what the object is as compared with other things, and in relation to them. We go on with this process of reasoning and argument until we can reason and argue no more about a object: then we suppress the process, stopping all comparing and arguing, with the attention fixed actively upon the object, trying to penetrate the indefiniteness which for us appears to surround it. That is contemplation.

The beginner should bear in mind that meditation is a science of a lifetime, so that he should not expect to attain to the stage of pure contemplation in his earlier efforts.

Contemplation may be described also as keeping the consciousness on one thing and drawing it into oneself so that the thinker and it become one.

When a well-trained mind can maintain its one-pointedness or concentration for some time, and can then drop the object, maintaining the fixed attention, but without the attention being directed to anything, then the stage of contemplation is reached.

In this stage the mental body shows no image; its own materials are held steady and firm, receiving no impressions, perfectly calm, like still water. This state cannot last for more than a very brief period, being like the "critical" state of the chemist, the point between two states of matter.

Expressed in another way, as the mental body is stilled, the consciousness escapes from it and passes into and out of the "laya centre", the neutral points of contact between the mental and the causal body.

This passage is accompanied by a momentary swoon, or loss of consciousness, the inevitable result of the disappearance of objects of consciousness, followed by consciousness in the higher body. The dropping out of objects of consciousness belonging to the lower worlds is thus followed by the appearance of objects of consciousness in the higher world.

Then the ego can shape the mental body according to his own lofty thoughts, and permeate it with his own vibrations. He can mould it after the visions he has obtained of planes even higher than his own, and can thus convey to the lower consciousness ideas to which the mental body would otherwise be unable to respond.

These are the inspirations of genius, that flash down into the mind with dazzling light and illuminate a world. The very man himself who gives them to the world can scarcely tell, in his ordinary mental state, how they have reached him ; but he knows that in some strange way-----

*"the power within me peeling
Lives on my lip and beckons with my hand "*

Of this nature also are the ecstasy and visions of Saints, of all creeds and in all ages; in these cases, prolonged and absorbing prayer, or contemplation, has produced the necessary brain-condition. The avenues of the senses have become closed by the intensity of the inner concentration, and the same state is reached, spasmodically and involuntarily, which the Raja Yogi seeks deliberately to attain.

The transition from meditation to contemplation has been described as passing from meditation "with seed" to meditation "without seed". Having steadied the mind, it is held poised

on the highest point of the reasoning, the last link in the chain of argument, or on the central thought or figure of the whole process; that is meditation with seed.

Then the student should let everything go, but still keeping the mind in the position gained, the highest point reached, vigorous and alert. That is meditation without seed. Remaining poised, waiting in the silence and the void, the man is in the "cloud". Then suddenly there will be a change, a change unmistakable, stupendous, incredible. This is contemplation leading to illumination.

Thus, for example, practising contemplation on the ideal man, on a Master, having formed an image of the Master, the student contemplates it with ecstasy, filling himself with its glory and its beauty, and then straining upwards towards Him, he endeavours to raise his consciousness to the ideal, to merge himself in it, to become one with it.

The momentary swoon mentioned above is called in Sanskrit the Dharma-Megha, the cloud of righteousness ; Western mystics speak of it as the "Cloud on the Mount", the "Cloud on the Sanctuary", the "Cloud on the Mercy-Seat". The man feels as though surrounded by a dense mist, conscious that he is not alone, but unable to see. Presently the cloud thins, and the consciousness of the higher plane dawns. But before it does so it seems to the man that his very life is draining away, that he is hanging in the void of great darkness unspeakably lonely. But "Be still, and know that I am God". In that silence and stillness the Voice of the Self shall be heard, the glory of the Self shall be seen. The cloud vanishes and the Self is made manifest.

Before it is possible to pass from meditation to contemplation, wishing and hoping must be entirely given up, at least during the period of practice : in other words, Kâma must be perfectly under control. The mind can never be single while wishes occupy it; every wish is a seed from which may spring anger, untruthfulness, impurity, resentment, greed, carelessness, discontent, sloth, ignorance etc. While one wish of hope remains, these violations of the law are possible.

So long as there are wishes, non-satisfactions, they will call one aside ; the stream of thought is ever seeking to flow aside into little gullies and channels left open by unsatisfied desires and indecisive thought.

Every unsatisfied desire, every un-thought-out problem, will present a hungry mouth ever calling aside the attention ; when the train of thought meets a difficulty it will swing aside to attend to these calls. Tracing out interrupted chains of thought, it will be found that they have their source in unsatisfied desires and unsettled problems.

The process of contemplation commences when the conscious activity begins to run, as it were, at right angles to the usual activity, which endeavours to understand a thing in reference to other things of its own nature and plane ; such movement cuts across the planes of its existence and penetrates into its subtler inner nature. When the attention is no longer divided into parts by the activities of comparing, the mind will move as a whole, and will seem quite still, just as a spinning top may appear to stand still when it is in most rapid motion.

In contemplation one no longer thinks about the object, it is better even not to start with any idea of the self and the object as two different things in relation to one another, because to do so will tend to colour the idea with feeling. The endeavour should be made to reach such a point of self-detachment that the contemplation can start from inside the object itself, the mental enthusiasm and energy being at the same time kept up all along the line of thought. The consciousness is to be held, poised like a bird on the wing, looking forward and never thinking of turning back.

In contemplation the thought is carried inwards until it can go no further ; it is held in that position without going back or turning aside, knowing that there is something there, although it is unable to grasp clearly what it is. In this contemplation there is, of course nothing in the nature of sleep or mental activity, but an intense search, a prolonged effort to see in the indefiniteness something definite, without descending to the ordinary lower regions of conscious activity in which the vision is normally clear and precise.

A devotee would practise contemplation in a similar manner, but in his case the activity would be mainly feeling rather than thought.

In contemplation on his own nature, the student repudiates his identity with the outer bodies and with the mind. In this process he is not divesting himself of attributes, but of limitations. The mind is swifter and freer than the body, and beyond the mind is spirit, which is freer and swifter still. Love is more possible in the quietude of the heart than in any outer expression, but in the spirit beyond the mind it is divinely certain. Reason and judgement ever correct the halting evidence of the senses ; the vision of the spirit discerns the truth without organs and without mind.

The key to success at every step of these practices may be stated thus: obstruct the lower activities, while maintaining the full flow of conscious energy. First, the lower mind must be made vigorous and alert; then its activity must be obstructed while the impetus gained is used to exercise and develop the higher faculties within.

An ancient science of Yoga teaches, when the processes of the thinking mind are repressed by the active will, the man finds himself in a new state of consciousness which transcends the ordinary thinking and governs it, just as thought transcends and selects among desires, and just as desires prompt to particular actions and efforts. Such a superior state of consciousness cannot be described in terms of the lower mind, but its attainment means that the man is conscious that he is something above mind and thought even though mental activity may be going on, just as all cultured people recognise that they are not the physical body, even when that body may be acting.

There is thus another state of existence, or rather another living conception of life, beyond the mind with its laboured processes of discernment, of comparisons and causal relations between

things. That higher state is to be realised only when the activities of consciousness are carried, in all their earthly fervour and vigour, beyond the groping cave-life in which they normally dwell. That higher consciousness will come to all men sooner or later; and when it comes all life will suddenly appear changed.

As the student by his meditation grows richer in spiritual experience, he will thus find new phases of consciousness gradually opening up within him. Fixed in aspiration upon his ideal, he will presently become aware of the influence of that ideal raying down upon him, and as he makes a desperate effort to reach the object of his devotion, for a brief moment the floodgates of heaven itself will be opened and he will find himself made one with his ideal and suffused with the glory of its realisation. Having transcended the more formal figures of the mind, an intense effort is made to reach upwards. Then will come the attainment of that state of ecstasy of spirit, when the limits of the personality have fallen away and all shadow of separateness has vanished in the perfect union of object and seeker.

As said in [The Voice of The Silence](#) : "Thou canst not travel on the Path before thou hast become that Path itself...Behold ! thou hast become the light, thou hast become the sound, thou art thy Master and thy God. Thou art thyself the object of thy search; the voice unbroken, that resounds throughout eternities, exempt from change, from sin exempt, the seven sounds in one."

It were idle to attempt further description of such experiences, for they are beyond the reach of formulated utterance. Words serve but as signposts pointing out the way to that which is ineffably glorious, so that the pilgrim may know whither to direct his steps.

CHAPTER XVIII

SLEEP-LIFE

Many people find themselves troubled with streams of wandering thought when they are trying to fall asleep. In such cases a mental shell will deliver them from such of these thoughts as come from without. Such a shell need only be temporary, since all that is required is peace for an interval sufficient to allow the man to fall asleep.

The man will carry away with him this mental shell when he leaves his physical body, but its work will then be accomplished, its sole object being to enable him to leave his body.

Whilst he was in the physical body, the mental action on the brain particles may easily have prevented him quitting the body; but when once he is away from the body the same worry or wandering thought will not bring him back to it.

When the shell breaks up, the stream of idle thoughts or mental worry will probably re-assert itself, but as the man will be away from his physical brain this will not interfere with the repose

of the body.

It is an extremely rare occurrence for either an ordinary person during sleep, or a psychically developed person in trance condition, to penetrate to the mental plane. Purity of life and purpose would be an absolute pre-requisite, and even when the mental plane was reached there would be nothing that could be called real consciousness, but simply a capacity for receiving impressions.

An example showing the possibility of entering the mental plane during sleep may be given. A person of pure mind and considerable though untrained psychic capacity was approached during sleep, and a thought-picture was presented to her mind. So intense was the feeling of reverent joy, so lofty and so spiritual were the thoughts evoked by the contemplation of the glorious scene that the consciousness of the sleeper passed into the mental body, i.e., she rose" to the mental plane. Although she was floating in the sea of light and colour, nevertheless she was entirely absorbed in her own thought, and conscious of nothing beyond it. She remained in that condition for several hours, though apparently unconscious of the passage of time. It is clear in this case, that although the sleeper was conscious on the mental plane, yet she was by no means conscious of it.

It seems probable that a result such as this would be possible only in the case of a person having already some amount of psychic development; the same condition is even more definitely necessary in order that a mesmerised subject could touch the mental plane in trance.

The reason for this, as previously stated, is that in the average man the mental body is not sufficiently developed to be employed as a separate vehicle of consciousness. It can, in fact, be employed as a vehicle only by those who have been specially trained in its use by teachers belonging to the Great Brotherhood of Initiates.

We may repeat here what was said in Chapter XVI, viz., that up to the time of the First Initiation, a man works at night in his astral body; but as soon as it is perfectly under control, and he is able to use it fully, work in the mental body is begun. When this body in turn is completely organised, it is a far more flexible vehicle than the astral body, and much that is impossible on the astral plane can be accomplished therein.

Although a man after death may live in the heaven world, i.e., on the mental plane [as we shall see in later chapters], yet he is shut up in a shell of his own thoughts; this cannot be called functioning on the mental plane, for that involves the ability to move about freely on that plane, and to observe what exists there.

A man who is able to function freely in the mental body has the capacity of entering upon all the glory and beauty of the mental plane, and possesses, even when working on the astral plane, the far more comprehensive mental sense, which opens up to him such marvellous vistas of knowledge, and practically renders error all but impossible.

When functioning in the mental body, a man leaves his astral body behind him along with the physical body; if he wishes to show himself upon the astral plane for any reason, he does not send for his own astral vehicle, but by a single action of his will materialises one for his temporary need. Such an astral materialisation is called a *mâyâvirûpa*, and to form it for the first time usually needs the assistance of a qualified master. [This subject will be dealt with in our next chapter].

There is another way in which the sleep-life can be usefully employed, viz., for solving problems. The method is, of course, practised by many people, though for the most part unconsciously; it is expressed in the proverb that "The night brings counsel". The problem to be solved should be quietly held in the mind when going to sleep; it should not be debated or argued, or sleep may be prevented; it should be merely stated to the mind and left. Then, when during sleep the Thinker is freed from the physical body and brain, he will take up the problem and deal with it. Usually the thinker will impress the solution on the brain so that it will be in the consciousness on awakening. It is a good plan to keep paper and pencil by the bed in order to note down the solution immediately on waking, because a thought thus obtained is very readily erased by the thronging stimuli from the physical world, and is not easily recovered.

CHAPTER XIX

THE MÂYÂVIRÛPA

MÂYÂVIRÛPA means literally "body of illusion". It is a temporary astral body made by one who is able to function in the mental body. It may, or may not, resemble the physical body, the form given to it being suitable to the purpose for which it is projected. It may be made, at will, visible or invisible on the physical plane; it can be made indistinguishable from a physical body, warm and firm to the touch, as well as visible, able to carry on a conversation, at all points like a physical being.

The advantage of using the MÂYÂVIRÛPA is that it is not subject to glamour on the astral plane, as is the astral body; no astral glamour can overpower the MÂYÂVIRÛPA, or astral illusion deceive it.

With the power to form the mayavirupa, a man is able to pass instantly from the mental plane to the astral and back, and to use at all times the greater power and keener sense on the mental plane; it is necessary to form the astral materialisation only when the man wishes to become visible to people in the astral world. When he has finished his work on the astral plane he withdraws to the mental plane again, and the mayavirupa vanishes, its materials returning to the general circulation of astral matter, whence they had been drawn by the pupil's will.

When in the MÂYÂVIRÛPA, a man may use the mental plane method of thought-transference so far as understanding another man is concerned; but, of course, the power of conveying the

thought in that way to another is limited by the degree of development of that other man's astral body.

It is necessary that the Master shall first show His pupil how to make the MÂYÂVIRÛPA, after which, although it is not at first an easy matter, he can do it for himself.

After the Second Initiation, rapid progress is made with the development of the mental body, and it is at or near this point that the pupil learns to use the MÂYÂVIRÛPA.

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THE MENTAL BODY

By [Arthur E. Powell](#)

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CHAPTER XX

DEVACHAN : PRINCIPLES

The first portion of the life after death, spent on the astral plane, has already been fully described in The Astral Body. We therefore now take up our study from the moment when the astral body is left behind on its own plane, and the man withdraws his consciousness into the mental body, ie., "rises" to the mental plane, and in so doing enters what is known as the heaven-world. This is usually called by Theosophists Devachan, which means literally the Shining Land; it is also termed in Sanskrit Devasthân, the land of the Gods; it is the Svarga of the Hindus, the Sukhavati of the Buddhists, the Heaven of the Zoroastrian, Christian and Mohammedan; it has been called also the "Nirvana " of the common people." The basic principle of devachan is that it is a world of thought.

A man in devachan is described as a devachanî.

[The word Devachan is etymologically inaccurate, and therefore misleading. It has, however, become so firmly embedded in the Theosophical terminology that the present compiler has retained it throughout this volume. At least it has the merit of being less clumsy than "heaven-world" –A. E. Powell.]

In the older books devachan is described as a specially guarded part of the mental plane, where all sorrow and evil are excluded by the action of the great spiritual Intelligences who superintend human evolution. It is the blissful resting-place of man where he peacefully assimilates the fruits of his physical life.

In reality, however, devachan is not a reserved part of the mental plane. It is rather that each man, as we shall see presently, shuts himself up in his own shell, and therefore takes no part in the life of the mental plane at all; he does not move about freely and deal with people as he does on the astral plane.

Another way of regarding what has been called the artificial guardianship of devachan, the gulf that surrounds each individual there, arises from the fact that the whole of the kâmic, or astral, matter has, of course been swept away, and is no longer there. The man therefore has no vehicle, no medium of communication which can respond to anything in the lower worlds. For practical purposes these are in consequence non-existent for him.

The final separation of the mental body from the astral does not involve any pain or suffering; in fact, it is impossible that the ordinary man should in any way realise its nature; he would simply feel himself sinking gently into a delightful repose.

There is however, usually a period of blank unconsciousness, analogous to that which usually follows physical death; the period may vary within wide limits, and from it the man awakens gradually.

It appears that this period of unconsciousness is one of gestation, corresponding to the pre-natal physical life, and

being necessary for the building up of the devachanic ego for the life in devachan. Part of it appears to be occupied in the absorption by the astral permanent atom of everything that has to be carried forward for the future, and part of it in vivifying the matter of the mental body for its coming separate independent life.

When the man awakens again, after the second death, his first sense is one of indescribable bliss and vitality, a feeling of such other joy in living that he needs for the time nothing but just to live. Such bliss is of the essence of life in all the higher worlds of the system. Even astral life has possibilities of happiness far greater than anything that we can know in the physical life, but the heaven-life is out of all proportion more blissful than the astral. In each higher world the same experience is repeated, each far surpassing the preceding one. This is true not only of the feeling of bliss, but also of wisdom and breadth of view. The heaven life is so much fuller and wider than the astral that no comparison between them is possible.

As the sleeper awakens in devachan the most delicate hues greet his opening eyes, the very air seems music and colour, the whole being is suffused with light and harmony. Then through the golden haze appear the faces of those he has loved on earth, etherealised into the beauty which expresses their noblest, loveliest emotions, unmarred by the troubles and the passions of the lower worlds. No man may describe adequately the bliss of the awakening into the heaven-world.

This intensity of bliss is the main characteristic of the heaven-life. It is not merely that evil and sorrow are in the nature of things impossible in that world, or even that every creature is happy there. It is a world in which every being must, from the very fact of his presence there, be enjoying the highest spiritual bliss of which he is capable, a world where power of response to his aspirations is limited only by his capacity to aspire. This sense of the overwhelming presence of universal joy never leaves a man in devachan; nothing on earth is like it, nothing can image it; the tremendous spiritual vitality of this celestial world is indescribable.

Various attempts have been made to describe the heaven-world, but all of them fail because it is by its nature indescribable in physical language. Thus Buddhist and Hindu seers speak of trees of gold and silver with jewelled fruits; the Jewish scribe, having lived in a great and magnificent city, spoke of the streets of gold and silver; more modern Theosophical writers draw their similes from the colours of the sunset and the glories of the sea and sky. Each alike tries to paint the truth, too grand for words, by employing such similes as are familiar to his mind.

The man's position in the mental world differs widely from that in the astral. In the astral he was using a body to which he was thoroughly accustomed, having been in the habit of using it during sleep. The mental vehicle however, he has never used before, and it is far from being fully developed. It thus shuts him out to a great extent from the world about him, instead of enabling him to see it.

During his purgatorial life on the astral plane the lower part of his nature burnt itself away; now there remain to him only his higher and more refined thoughts, the noble and unselfish aspirations which he entertained during his earth-life.

In the astral world he may have a comparatively pleasant life, though distinctly limited; on the other hand, he may suffer considerably in that purgatorial existence. But in devachan he reaps the results only of such of his thoughts and feelings as have been entirely unselfish; hence the devachanic life cannot be other than blissful.

As a Master has said, devachan *"is the land where there are no tears, no sighs, where there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage, and where the just realise their full perfection."*

The thoughts which cluster round the devachani make a sort of shell, through the medium of which he is able to respond to certain types of vibration in this refined matter. These thoughts are the powers by which he draws on the infinite wealth of the heaven-world. They serve as windows through which he can look out upon the glory and beauty of the heaven-world, and through which also response may come to him from forces without.

Every man who is above the lowest savage must have had some touch of pure unselfish feeling, even if it were but once in all his life; and that will be a window for him now.

It would be an error to regard this shell of thought as a limitation. Its function is not to shut a man off from the vibrations of the plane, but rather to enable him to respond to such influences as are within his capacity to cognise. The mental plane [as we shall see in Chapter XXVII] is a reflection of the Divine Mind, a storehouse of infinite extent, from which the person enjoying heaven is able to draw just according to the power of his own thoughts and aspirations generated during his physical and astral life.

In the heaven-world these limitations –if we may call them that for the moment –no longer exist; but with that higher world we are not concerned in this volume.

Each man is able to draw upon the heaven-world, and to cognise only so much of it as he has by previous effort prepared himself to take. As the Eastern simile has it, each man brings his own cup; some of the cups are large, and some are small. But, large or small, every cup is filled to its uttermost capacity; the sea of bliss is far more than enough for all.

The ordinary man is not capable of any great activity in this mental world; his condition is chiefly receptive, and his vision of anything outside his own shell of thought is of the most limited character. His thoughts and aspirations being only along certain lines, he cannot suddenly form new ones; hence he perforce can profit little from the living forces which surround him, or from the mighty angelic inhabitants of the mental world, even though many of these readily respond to certain of man's aspirations.

Thus a man who, during earth-life, has chiefly regarded physical things, has made for himself but few windows through which he may contact the world in which he finds himself. A man, however, whose interests lay in art, music or philosophy will find measureless enjoyment and unlimited instruction awaiting him, the extent to which he can benefit depending solely upon his own power of perception.

There is a large number of people whose only higher thoughts are those connected with affection and devotion. A man who loves another deeply, or feels strong devotion to a personal deity, makes a strong mental image of that friend, or of the deity, and inevitably takes that mental image with him into the mental world, because it is to that level of matter that it naturally belongs.

Now follows an important and interesting result. The love which forms and retains the image is a very powerful force, strong enough in fact to reach and to act upon the ego of the friend, which exists on the higher mental plane; for it is of course, the ego that is the real man loved, not the physical body which is so partial a representation of him. The ego of the friend, feeling the vibration, at once and eagerly responds to it, and pours himself into the thought-form which has been made for him. The man's friend is therefore truly present with him more vividly than ever before.

It makes no difference whatever whether the friend is what we call living or dead; this is because the appeal is made, not to the fragment of the friend which is sometimes imprisoned in a physical body, but to the man himself on his own true level. The ego always responds; so that one who has a hundred friends can simultaneously and fully respond to the affection of every one of them, for no number of representations of a lower level can exhaust the infinity of the ego. Hence a man can express himself in the "heavens" of an indefinite number of people.

Each man in his heaven-life thus has around him the vivified thought-forms of all the friends for whose company he wishes. Moreover, they are for him always their best, because he has himself made the thought-images through which they manifest.

In the limited physical world we are accustomed to thinking of our friend as only the limited manifestation which we know on the physical plane. In the heaven world, on the other hand, we are clearly much nearer to the reality in our friends than we ever were on earth, as we are two stages, or planes, nearer the home of the ego himself.

There is an important difference between life after death on the mental plane and life on the astral plane. For on the astral plane we meet our friends [during sleep of their physical bodies] in their astral bodies; i.e., we are still dealing with their *personalities*. On the mental plane, however, we do not meet our friends in the mental bodies which they use on earth. On the contrary, their egos build for themselves entirely new and separate mental vehicles and, instead of the consciousness of the personalities, the consciousness of the egos work through the mental vehicles. The mental plane activities of our friends are thus entirely separate in every way from the personalities of their physical lives.

Hence any sorrow or trouble which may fall upon the *personality* of the living man cannot in the least affect the thought-form of him which his ego is using as an additional mental body. If in that manifestation he did know of the sorrow or trouble of the personality, it would not be a trouble to him, because he would regard it from the point of view of the ego in the causal body, viz., as a lesson to be learned, or some karma to be worked out. In this view of his there is no delusion; on the contrary, it is the view of the lower personality which is the deluded one; for what the personality sees as troubles or sorrows are to the real man in the causal body merely steps on the upward path of evolution.

We also see that a man in devachan is *not* conscious of the personal lives of his friends on the physical plane. What we may call the mechanical reason for this has already been fully explained. There are also other reasons, equally cogent, for this arrangement. For it would obviously be impossible for a man in devachan to be happy if he looked back and saw those whom he loved in sorrow and suffering, or in the commission of sin.

In devachan there is thus no separation due to space or time; nor can any misunderstanding of word or thought arise; on the contrary, there is a far closer communion, soul with soul, than ever was the case in earth-life. On the mental plane there is no barrier between soul and soul; exactly in proportion to the reality of soul-life in us is the reality of soul-communion in devachan. The soul of our friend lives in the form of him which we have created just to the extent that his soul and ours can throb in sympathetic vibration.

We can have no touch with those with whom on earth the ties were only of the physical and astral bodies, or if they and we were discordant in the inner life. Hence, in devachan no enemy can enter, for only sympathetic accord of mind and heart can draw men together in the heaven-world.

With those who are beyond us in evolution, we come into contact just so far as we can respond to them; with those who are less advanced than we are, we commune to the limit of *their* capacity.

The student will recollect that the Desire-Elemental re-arranges the astral body after death in concentric layers of matter, the densest outermost, thus confining the man to that sub-plane of the astral world to which belongs the matter in the outermost layer of his astral body. On the mental plane there is nothing to correspond to this, the mental elemental not acting in the manner adopted by the Desire-Elemental.

There is also another important difference between the astral and mental life. On the mental plane the man does not pass through the various levels in turn, but is drawn *direct* to the level which best corresponds to his degree of development. On that level he spends the whole of his life in the mental body. The varieties of that life are infinite, as each man makes his own for himself.

In devachan, the heaven world, all that was valuable in the moral and mental experiences of the Thinker during the life just ended is worked out, meditated over, and gradually transmuted into definite moral and mental faculty, into powers which he will take with him to his next incarnation. He does not work into the mental body, the actual memory of the past, for the mental body will, as we shall see in due course, disintegrate. The memory of the past abides only in the Thinker himself, who has lived through it and who endures. But the facts of past experience are worked into capacity, so that, if a man has studied deeply, the effects of that study will be the creation of a special faculty to acquire and master that subject when it is first presented to him in another incarnation. He will be born with a special aptitude for that line of study, and will absorb it with great facility.

Everything thought upon earth is thus utilised in devachan; every aspiration is worked up into power; all frustrated efforts become faculties and abilities; struggles and defeats re-appear as materials to be wrought into instruments of victory; sorrows and errors shine luminous as precious metals to be worked up into wise and well-directed volitions. Schemes of beneficence, for which power and skill to accomplish were lacking in the past, are in devachan worked out in thought, acted out, as it were, stage by stage, and the necessary power and skill are developed as faculties of mind to be put into use in a future life on earth.

In devachan, as a Master has said, the ego collects "*only the nectar of moral qualities and consciousness from every terrestrial personality*".

During the devachanic period the ego reviews his store of experiences, the harvest of the earth-life just closed, separating and classifying them, assimilating what is capable of assimilation, rejecting what is effete and useless. The ego can no more be always busied in the whirl of earth-life than a workman can always be gathering store of materials, and never fabricating from them goods; or than a man can always be eating food and never digesting and assimilating it to build up the tissues of his body. Thus devachan, except for the very few, as we shall see later, is an absolute necessity in the scheme of things.

An imperfect understanding of the true nature of devachan has sometimes led people to think that the life of the ordinary person in the lower heaven-world is nothing but a dream and an illusion; that when he imagines himself happy amidst his family and friends, or carrying out his plans with such fullness of joy and success, he is really only a victim of a cruel delusion.

This idea results from misconception of what constitutes reality [so far as we can ever know it], and from a faulty point of view. The student should recollect that most people realise so little of their mental life, even as led in the body, that when they are presented with a picture of mental life out of the body, they lose all sense of reality, and feel as though they had passed into a world of dream. The truth is, however, that physical life compares unfavourably, as regards reality, with life in the mental world.

During ordinary earth-life it is obvious that that average person's conception of everything around him is imperfect and inaccurate in very many ways. He knows, for example, nothing of the etheric, astral and mental forces which lie behind everything he sees, and form in fact by far the most important part of it. His whole outlook is limited to that small portion of things which his senses, his intellect, his education, his experience, enable him to take in. Thus he lives in a world very largely of his own creation. He does not realise that this is so, because he knows no better. Thus, from this point of view, ordinary physical life is at least as illusory as is life in devachan, and careful thought will show that it is really far more so.

For, when a man in devachan takes his thoughts to be real things, he is perfectly right; they are *real* things on the mental plane, because in that world nothing but thought can be real. The difference is that on the mental plane we recognise this great fact in nature, whereas on the physical plane we do not. Hence we are justified in saying that, of the two, the delusion is greater on the physical plane. Mental life, in fact, is far more intense, vivid, and nearer to reality than the life of the senses.

Hence, in the words of a Master: "we call the posthumous life the only reality, and the terrestrial one, including the personality itself, only imaginary." "To call the devachan existence a 'dream' in any other sense than that of a conventional term, is to renounce for ever the knowledge of the Esoteric Doctrine, the sole custodian of truth".

One reason for the feeling of reality in earth-life, and of unreality when we hear of devachan, is that we look at earth-life from *within*, under the full sway of its illusions, while we contemplate devachan from *outside* free for the time from its particular grade of *mâyâ* or illusion.

In devachan itself the process is reversed; for its inhabitants feel their own life to be the real one, and look on earth-life as full of the most patent illusions and misconceptions. On the whole, those in devachan are nearer the truth

than their physical critics in earth-life, but of course the illusions of earth, though lessened, are not wholly escaped from in the lower heavens, in spite of the fact that contact there is more real and more immediate.

In more general terms, the truth is that the higher we rise through the planes of being, the nearer we draw to reality; for spiritual things are relatively real and enduring, material things illusory and transitory.

The student may usefully pursue this thought a little further, and regard the life in devachan as the natural and inevitable result of the earlier life spent on the physical and astral planes. Our highest ideals and aspirations are never realised on the physical plane, nor can they ever be realised there, because of the narrowness of its possibilities and the comparative grossness of its matter.

But by the law of karma [of which that known as the conservation of energy is another expression] no force can ever be lost or robbed of its due effect; it *must* produce its due and full effect, and until its opportunity arises it remains as so much stored-up energy. In other words, much of the higher spiritual energy of man cannot bring about its due result in earth-life, because his higher principles cannot respond to such fine and subtle vibrations until the man is free from the incubus of the flesh. In the heaven-life, for the first time, all this hindrance is removed, and the accumulated energy pours forth in the inevitable reaction which the law of karma demands. "On the earth the broken arcs", says Browning, "in the heaven a perfect round". So perfect justice is done, and nothing is ever lost, even though in the physical world it may seem that much has missed its aim and come to nothing.

Devachan is thus by no means a dream, or lotus-land of purposeless idling. On the contrary, it is a land, or better, a condition of existence, where the mind and heart develop, unhindered by gross matter or by trivial cares, where weapons are forged for the struggles of earth-life, and where, in fact, the progress of the future is secured.

The student may perceive also that the system upon which nature has arranged the life after death is the only conceivable one which could fulfil its object of making everyone happy to the fullest extent of his capacity for happiness. If the joy of heaven were of one particular type only [as it is according to certain orthodox theories] some would weary of it, some would not be able to participate in it, either from want of taste in that particular direction, or from want of the necessary education. In *Captain Stormfield's Visit to Heaven*, Mark Twain has made of the old-fashioned idea of heaven such a *reductio ad absurdum* as to make it [one would think] forever untenable, thereby incidentally affording a classic example of the uses of humorous analysis even in matters of profound religion and philosophy.

Returning to our main theme, what other arrangement with regard to relatives and friends could be equally satisfactory? If the departed were permitted to follow the fluctuating fortunes of their friends on earth, happiness would be impossible for them. If, without knowing what was happening to them, they had to wait until the death of those friends before meeting them, there would be a painful period of suspense, often extending over many years, while in many cases friends would arrive so changed as to be no longer sympathetic.

Nature has avoided all these difficulties. Each man decides for himself, both the length and character of his heaven-life, by the causes which he has himself generated during his earth-life; therefore he cannot but have exactly the amount which he has deserved, and exactly that quality of joy which is best suited to his idiosyncrasies. Those whom he loves he has ever with him, and always at their noblest and best; no shadow of discord or change can ever come between them, since he receives from them all the time exactly what he wishes. In fact, nature's method is infinitely superior to anything which the wit or imagination of man has ever been able to offer in its place.

It is, perhaps, difficult on the physical plane to realise the creative nature of the powers exercised by the Thinker, clad in his mental body, and untrammelled by the physical vehicle. On earth, an artist may create visions of exquisite beauty, but when he seeks to embody them in the materials of earth he finds they fall short of his mental conceptions. In devachan, however, all that a man thinks is at once reproduced in form, out of the rare and subtle matter of mind-stuff itself, the medium in which the mind normally works when free from passion, and which responds to every mental impulse. Thus the beauty of man's surroundings in devachan is indefinitely increased to the wealth and energy of his mind.

The student should strive to realise that the mental plane is a vast and splendid world of vivid life in which we are living *now*, as well as in the periods between physical incarnations. It is only our lack of development, the limitations imposed by the physical body, that prevent us from fully realising that all the glory of the highest heaven is about us here and now, and that influences flowing from that world are ever playing upon us, if we will only understand and receive them. As the Buddhist teacher said: "the light is all about you, if you will only cast the bandage from your eyes and look. It is so wonderful, so beautiful, so far beyond what any man has dreamt of or prayed for, and it is forever and ever.". [The Soul of a People, p.163.]

In other words, devachan is a state of consciousness, and may be entered at any time by one who has learned to withdraw his soul from his senses.
We may consider that what devachan is to each earth-life, so is Nirvana to the finished cycle of reincarnation.

CHAPTER XXI

DEVACHAN : LENGTH AND INTENSITY

In view of the fact that man makes for himself his own purgatory and his own heaven, it is clear that neither of these states of consciousness can ever be eternal, for a finite cause cannot produce an infinite result.

The apportionment of time that a man spends in the physical, astral and mental worlds varies considerably as he evolves. The primitive man lives almost exclusively in the physical world, spending only a few years on the astral plane after death. As he develops, his astral life becomes longer, and as his intellect unfolds he begins to spend a little time on the mental plane as well.

The ordinary man of civilised races remains longer in the mental world than in the physical and astral. In fact, the more a man evolves, the shorter becomes his astral, and the longer his mental life.

Hence we see that, except in the very earliest stages of his evolution, a man spends by far the greater part of his time on the mental plane. As we shall see presently in detail, except in the case of the very undeveloped, the proportion of the physical life to the mental life is rarely more than 1 in 20, and in the case of fairly well-developed people it would sometimes fall as low as 1 in 30. The student must ever bear in mind that the true home of the real man, the ego, is the mental plane; each descent into incarnation is merely a short, though important, episode in his career.

The tables on pp. 186-187, give an idea of the approximate average intervals between lives, according to the class of man concerned, together with the average portion spent on the astral, mental and causal levels.

The student is asked not to attach too literal or too rigid an interpretation to this classification by social rank, which is in some ways objectionable. At best the grouping should be taken as a rough and ready approximation. For it is obvious, for example that there may be specimens of the "drunkard and unemployable" class at any social level; or a person who is by his social position belongs to the "country gentlemen" class may truly be nothing higher than an unskilled labourer –though he may omit the labour! It would have been better if, instead of social grade, some method of classification by moral and mental development could have been devised; but even this method might have proved just as difficult as that which has been adopted.

Individualised in Moon-Chain Round No.	Moon-Men: First Order			
	Present Type	Average length in years		
		Total interval between	Astral Life	Heaven-Life

		lives		Lower Mental	Causal
5	Advanced egos on the Path (many of these are taking continuous incarnations, so that for them the question of intervals between lives does not arise) Egos approaching the Path: -	1,500-2,000 or more	5 (an ego may even pass through rapidly and unconsciously	1,350-1,800 mostly on the highest level	150-200
	(a) Individualised through Intellect	1,200	5	1,150	50
	(b) Individualised through Emotion or Will	700	5	650	50
	Men distinguished in art, science or religion	About same as preceding class	Tendency to longer astral and shorter causal life, especially for the religious and the artistic		
6	Country gentlemen and professional men	600- 1,000	20-25	600-1,000	Touch of consciousness
7	Uppder Middle Class	500	25	475	Nil

It must be understood that the above figures are *only* averages, a wide range on each side of them being possible.

Class of Ego	Present Type	Average length in years			
		Total interval between lives	Astral Life	Heave-Life	
				Lower Mental	Causal
Moon-Men: Second Order	Bourgeoisie	200-300	40	160-260 on lower levels	Nil
Moon Animal-Men	Skilled Workers	100-200	40	60-160 on lower levels	Nil

Moon-Animals: First Class	Unskilled Labourers	600-100	40-50	20-50 on lowest level	Nil
Moon-Animals: Second Class	Drunkards and Unemployables	40-50	40-50	Nil	Nil
Moon-Animals: Third Class	Lower of humanity	5	5	Nil	Nil

A certain difference is produced by the mode of the individualisation, but this difference is much less, in proportion, in the lower classes. Those individualised through intellect tend to take the longer of the two intervals mentioned, whereas those individualised in other ways tend to take the shorter interval. We shall return to this point and explain it in fuller detail presently.

Generally speaking, a man who dies young tends to have a shorter interval than one who dies in old age, but is likely to have a greater proportion of astral life, because most of the strong emotions which work themselves out in the astral life are generated in the earlier part of physical life, whereas the more spiritual energy, which finds its result in the heaven-life, is likely to continue until the end or near the end of the earth-life.

Thus, as we have seen, the total time spent in devachan depends upon the materials which the man has brought with him from earth-life; that is to say, everything which is capable of being worked up into mental and moral faculty –all the pure thoughts and emotions generated during earth-life, all the intellectual and moral efforts and aspirations, all the memories of useful work, and plans for human service. Not one is lost, however feeble or fleeting; but selfish animal passions *cannot enter*, there being no material in which they can be expressed.

Nor does evil in the past life, though it may largely preponderate over the good, prevent the full reaping of whatever scant harvest of good there may be; the devachanic life may be very brief, but the most depraved, if he has any faint longings after the right, any stirrings of tenderness, must have a period of devachanic life, in which the seed of good may put forth its tender shoots, in which the spark of good may be fanned into a tiny flame.

In the past, when men lived with their hearts fixed on heaven, and directed their lives with a view to enjoying its bliss, the period spent in devachan was very long, lasting sometimes for many thousands of years. At the present time, however, men's minds being so much more centred on earth, and so few of their thoughts being directed towards the higher life, their devachanic periods are correspondingly shortened.

Similarly, the time spent in the lower mental and the causal heaven-worlds are proportional to the amount of thought generated severally in the mental and the causal bodies. All that belongs to the *personal self*, with its ambitions, interests, loves, hopes and fears, have their fruition in the lower mental world, the world of *form*; those belonging to the higher mind, to the regions of abstract, impersonal thinking, have to be worked out on the causal levels, the *formless* world. As the above tables show, the majority of people only just enter the causal heaven-world, and pass out swiftly again; some spend a large portion of their devachanic life there; a few spend there almost the whole.

Thus, just as a man makes for himself his astral or purgatorial existence, so he decides for himself both the length and character of his heaven-life, by the causes which he generates during his earth-life. Hence he cannot but have both the amount which he has deserved, and also exactly the *quality* of joy which is best suited to his idiosyncrasies.

Another factor of great importance and interest, is that of the *intensity* of the devachanic life, which varies with the different classes of egos, and which of course produces a considerable effect upon the length of the heaven-life.

In the table on p. 186, within the same group of egos, two types are shown which, though equal in development, differ greatly in their intervals between lives, one of them taking about 1,200, and the other about 700 years between lives. Now the amount of spiritual force generated is roughly equal in the two cases, but those who take the shorter interval compress a double amount of bliss into their heaven-lives, working as it were, at high pressure, concentrating their experience, and so getting through nearly twice as much in any given period as the members of the other class.

This difference, as was briefly mentioned a few pages back, is due to the way in which individualisation was attained. Without entering into the details of individualisation [which would be beyond the scope of the present volume], it may be explained that those who individualise gradually by intellectual development, generate a different *kind* of spiritual force, which gives them a longer devachanic life, than those who individualise through an instantaneous uprush of affection or devotion, and who take their bliss in a much more concentrated or intense form. If there be any difference in the *amount* of force generated, it appears to be slightly more in the case of those who take the shorter interval.

Investigations have shown that there is great flexibility regarding intervals between lives, resulting in much variation in the rate at which egos work out their heaven-lives.

One important reason for this is the necessity of bringing together groups of people into incarnation at the same time, not only in order that they may work out mutual karmic inter-relations, but also that they may learn to work together for certain great ends.

There are, for example, certain groups of egos, known as "servers", who come together life after life, in order that they may pass through similar preparatory experiences, that the bonds of affection between them may be knit so strongly that they will be incapable of misunderstanding or mistrusting one another, when the strain of the real work they are destined to do comes upon them in the future. The one great fact that the group is devoted to service overpowers all other considerations, and the group is thus brought together in order that it may perform that service as a body of people.

In this, needless to say, there is no injustice; no one can escape one jot of the karma legitimately due to him. But the rate at which karma is worked out is adjusted to meet the particular circumstances of each case. Thus it sometimes happens that certain past karma would be cleared up rapidly in order that the person may be free to do higher work without hindrance from it; to this end it sometimes happens that a considerable accumulation of karma may descend upon a man at once in some great catastrophe; he thus gets rid of it rapidly, and his way is cleared before him.

Of course, in the case of the great bulk of humanity, there is no special interference of this nature, and their heaven-life works itself out at its ordinary rate.

Differences in the *time* of working out karma, involving a difference in intensity in the life, are shown by a greater or lesser brilliancy in the light of the mental body.

CHAPTER XXII

DEVACHAN : FURTHER PARTICULARS

Having studied some of the general features of devachan, and its broad purpose, it will now be necessary to go over the ground again, filling in more details, and adding other particulars which could not, without overloading, be included in the first description.

In spite of devachan being to a certain extent illusory, as indeed is all manifested life, in varying degree, nevertheless there is much greater reality in the heaven-life than there is in the earth life. This is clearly seen when we consider the conditions requisite for the attainment of devachan. For, in order that an aspiration or a thought-

force should result in existence on the mental plane, its dominant characteristic must be unselfishness.

Affection for family or friends takes man a man into the heaven-life, as also does religious devotion; but only if the affection or the devotion is unselfish. Affection which is an exacting, selfish kind of passion, which desires mainly to be loved, which thinks of what it receives rather than of what it gives, and which may so easily degenerate into the vice of jealousy, has in it no seed of the mental development; the forces which it sets in motion will never rise above the astral plane, the plane of desire, to which they so clearly belong.

Where there is no grasping, no drawing towards the self, no thought of return, there is a tremendous outpouring of force, which no astral matter can express, nor could the dimensions of the astral plane contain it. It needs the finer matter and the wider space of the mental plane, the energy generated belonging to that higher world.

Similarly the devotion of the religious devotee whose main thought is, not the glory of the deity, but how he may save his own soul, cannot lead to devachan. But on the other hand real religious devotion, which never thinks of self, but only of love and gratitude towards the deity or leader, and is inspired by ardent desire to do something for him or in his name, often leads to a prolonged heaven-life of a comparatively exalted type.

This would be the case whoever the deity or leader might be, and hence followers of the Buddha, of Krishna, of Ormuzd, Allah, or the Christ, would all equally attain their meed of celestial bliss, its length and quality depending not in the least upon its object, but upon the intensity and purity of the feeling.

It is an error to suppose that a man on the astral and mental planes after death is merely working out the results of his past earth-life; broadly speaking, this is true of the ordinary man, yet nevertheless even whilst he is enjoying the bliss of his devachan, he is at the same time affecting others, and he is therefore producing results, i.e., he is generating karma.

This must be so, in the very nature of things, because thought is the most potent factor in the creation of human karma. Every force has the characteristic of the plane on which it is generated, and the higher the plane the more potent and the more persistent the force.

In those cases, at present rare, in which, by raising the consciousness to the causal level, the higher mind and lower selves are unified, the consciousness of the ego is at the disposal of the man throughout the whole of his physical, astral and mental lives. Hence it follows that he is generating karma just as much at one period as at another, and he is able to modify the conditions of his life by the exercise of thought and will.

But, apart from such cases of well-developed men, even an ordinary man produces, quite unintentionally and unconsciously to himself, three separate results during the whole of his heaven-life.

First: The affection which he pours upon the thought-image he has made of his friend is a mighty power for good, which bears no inconsiderable part in the evolution of the ego of that friend. Affection is evoked from the friend, thus tending to intensify that admirable quality in him. Such an act is obviously one which generates karma.

It is even possible that the effect of this action may be manifested in the personality of the friend on the physical plane. For, if the ego be modified by the affection showered upon the thought-form it en-souls, it is possible that that modification may show itself in the personality, which is of course another manifestation of the same ego.

Second : A man who pours out a great flood of affection, and evokes in response other floods from his friends, is clearly distinctly improving the mental atmosphere of his neighbourhood. This atmosphere plays upon all the inhabitants of the world who are living in that atmosphere –devas, men, animals, plants, etc. This will clearly produce a karmic result.

Third : A thought of unselfish affection or devotion not only calls forth a response from the Logos to the individual who originated the thought, but also helps to fill the reservoir of spiritual force, which is held by the Nirmanakayas

at the disposal of the Masters of Wisdom and Their pupils for the helping of humanity [vide The Astral Body , p. 57]. Magnificent as may be the result of such affection or devotion during physical life, it is easy to see that the response to the thought of an entity in devachan, sustained perhaps for a thousand years, will make to the reservoir a considerable contribution, bringing to the world a benefit which is not calculable in any terms that we use upon the physical plane.

From all these considerations it should be clear that even quite an ordinary man, who has yet no special development of consciousness, is nevertheless capable of doing a great deal of good during his life in devachan. Hence he is during that time actually making fresh karma for himself, and may even modify his heaven-life while it is in progress.

In the physical world, many of our thoughts are mere fragments. In devachan the dreamer contemplates such fragments and patiently works them out in every detail, in every possibility of splendid performance, living through them with a vividness which nothing on earth can rival. He builds, shapes, moulds them into all their varied possibilities and tosses them into the world of form . Others may then pick them up, and be inspired by them to undertake schemes of reform, works of philanthropy, and so forth. Thus from the radiant thought-stuff of some solitary dreamer may arise wonderful changes, his "dreaming" helping to re-create the world.

It must however, be borne in mind that, owing to the limitations which the ordinary man imposes upon himself in devachan, he cannot originate a *fresh* line of affection or devotion. But his affection and devotion, along the lines which he has already decided, will be distinctly more powerful than they ever could have been while he was labouring under the heavy limitations of the physical body.

This point will bear a little further elaboration. In order to understand the relation of a man in devachan to his surroundings, we have to think [1] of the matter of the plane as moulded by his thought, and [2] of the forces of the plane as evoked in answer to his aspirations.

We have already seen how the man moulds the matter of the plane into thought-images of his friends, and how egos of the friends express themselves through the images.

There are also other living forces about him, mighty angelic inhabitants of the plane; of these, many are very sensitive to certain aspirations of man, and readily respond to them.

But the main point to bear in mind is that both his thoughts and his aspirations are along those lines only which he has already prepared during earth-life.

It might perhaps have been imagined that when a man rises to a plane of such transcendent force and vitality, he would be stirred to entirely new activities along new lines; but this is not the case. His mental body [as we saw previously] is not by any means in the same order as his lower vehicles, neither is it so fully under control. It has in the past been accustomed to receive its impressions and incitements to action from below, chiefly from the physical, and sometimes from the astral. It has done very little in this way of receiving direct mental vibrations at its own level; consequently it cannot suddenly begin to accept and respond to them. Practically, thus, the man does not initiate any new thoughts, but is limited to those which he has previously entertained, and which form the only windows through which he can look out on his new world. Hence, a colourless, flavourless personality necessarily has a colourless, feeble devachanic state.

A man thus takes into devachan just the mental furniture he has –neither less nor more. It is clearly, therefore, of great importance that during physical life he should make his thinking as accurate and as precise as possible, otherwise he will very much limit the usefulness of his devachan.

From this point of view, devachan is a world of effects, not causes, each man being limited to his own individual shades of perception and his capacity to appreciate. The more points of contact he has with the outer world, the more will be the starting-points or foci for development in devachan.

On the other hand, devachan, from the point of view of the next life, is essentially a world of causes, because in it all experiences are worked up into the character which will be brought forward when the man returns into incarnation. Devachan is thus the direct result of one life on earth, and prepares the way for the next life on earth.

The way in which man's vision is determined and limited by the windows through which perforce he must look, may best be studied by taking an actual example. Let us take that of music. A man who has no music in his soul has no window at all in that direction. A man, however who has a musical window is in the presence of a stupendous power. The degree to which he is able to respond will be determined by three factors. Pursuing the analogy of the glass in a window, we may call these three factors [1] the size of the glass; [2] its colour; [3] the quality of its material. Thus, if while on earth the man was able to appreciate only one class of music, he will obviously now be limited to that extent. His ideas of music may also be coloured, so as to admit only certain vibrations of music, or they may be of such poor material as to distort and darken everything that reaches him.

Assuming however, that his window is a good one, he will receive through it three distinct sets of impressions.

First: He will sense that music which is the expression of the ordered movement of the forces of the plane. There is truth behind the poetic idea of the "music of the spheres", for on these higher planes all movement and action produce harmonies of sound and colour. All thought –both his own and that of others –expresses itself in this way, in a lovely yet indescribable series of ever-changing chords, as of a thousand Aeolian harps. The musical manifestation of the glowing life of the heaven-world forms a background to all his other experiences.

Second : Among the inhabitants of the mental plane there is an order of devas, or angels, who are specially devoted to music and who habitually express themselves by its means to a fuller extent than the rest. They are known to the Hindus as Gandharvas . The man who has musical appreciation will certainly attract their attention, will come into contact with them, and with the music they create, and will assuredly acquire much from that intercourse, for they will use all kinds of overtones and variations which were previously unknown to him. In this way he will eventually emerge from the heaven-life far richer than he entered it.

Third : He will listen with keen appreciation to the music made by his fellow-men in the heaven world. Many of the great composers are there, pouring forth far greater music than any which they knew on earth. Much of the inspiration of earthly musicians is, in fact, but a faint echo of the music on the mental plane which they have dimly sensed.

The experience of a man who was a painter would be similar. He also would have the same three possibilities: [1] He would perceive the natural order of the plane expressing itself in colour as well as sound; [2] he would perceive the colour-language of the devas, an order of beings who communicate with one another by flashings of splendid colour ; [3] he would perceive the colour-creations of great artists on the mentalplane.

The same possibilities, *mutatis mutandis* , are open to a man in devachan, in all other directions of art or thought, so that there is an infinity for him to enjoy and to learn.

In considering the action and reaction between the man in devachan and the thought-image he makes of his friend, there are two factors to be taken into account: [1] The degree of development of the man himself; [2] the degree of development of the friend.

If the man himself is undeveloped, the image he makes of his friend will be imperfect, many of the higher qualities of the friend not being represented. Consequently the ego of the friend may be able to make but little use of the image, there being nothing through which he can express some of his qualities.

Nevertheless, even at the worst the expression of a friend through an image is much fuller and more satisfying than it ever was in the physical life. For in earth-life we see our friends but partially; our knowledge of them must always be exceedingly defective, and our communion with them imperfect; even when we do believe we know our friend truly and wholly, it is still only part of him which is in incarnation that we can know, there being far more

behind in the real ego which we cannot reach at all.

In fact, if it were possible for us to see with mental vision, the whole of our friend, the probability is that he would be quite unrecognisable; certainly he would not be the one whom we thought we had known before.

If, on the other hand, it is the friend who is undeveloped, even when a good image is made, there may not be sufficient development in the friend to enable him to take due advantage of the image ; i.e., he may be unable to fill completely the image of him that has been made. This however, is unlikely, and could take place only when a quite unworthy object had been unwisely idolised. Even then the man who made the image would not find any change or lack in his friend, for the friend is now *better* able to fulfil his ideal than he ever was during physical life. Hence the joy of the man in devachan is not in any way diminished.

Whilst an ego can fill hundreds of images with those qualities which he possesses, he cannot suddenly evolve and express a quality which he has not developed, merely because someone has imagined him to have developed it. Hence the enormous advantage of forming images of those [such as the Masters] who are capable of rising above even the highest conception that the lower mind can form of them. In the case of a Master, a man is drawing upon a depth of love and power which his mental plummet can never sound.

But in every case, the ego of the friend is reached by affection, and whatever may be its stage of development it at once responds by pouring itself into the image which has been made. Even the feeblest image that can be made is at any rate on the mental plane, and, therefore, is far easier for the ego to reach than is a physical body two planes lower down.

If the friend is still living in the physical body, he will of course be entirely unaware in his physical consciousness that his true self, or ego, is enjoying the additional manifestation; but this in no way affects the fact that the manifestation is a more real one and contains a nearer approximation to his true self than the one on the physical plane, which is all that most of us can as yet see.

From all these considerations it follows that a man who has made himself generally beloved, who has many real friends, will have a large number of thought-images in the devachans of his friends, and will thus evolve with far greater rapidity than a more ordinary man. This result is obviously the result of the karma of his development within himself of the qualities which make him so loveable.

The student will now clearly perceive why the personality, which we know on the physical plane, does *not* converse with its friends in devachan. But the real man, the ego, does do so, acting through the thought-image, which has been created on the mental plane.

The principle may perhaps be rendered still more clear by a practical example. Suppose that a mother, being somewhat narrow in her religious views, died, leaving behind her a well-loved daughter, and that the daughter later on broadened her religious ideas. The mother would continue to imagine that her daughter was still orthodox , and she would be able to see only as much of her daughter's thought as could be expressed by orthodox ideas; she would be unable to grasp the wider religious views which her daughter had now adopted.

But in so far as the ego of the daughter profited by what the personality had learned, there would be a tendency on her part gradually to widen out and perfect the conceptions of the mother, though always along the lines to which the mother was accustomed. There would be between them no sense of difference of opinion, and no avoidance of subjects of religion.

The above considerations apply to a person of ordinary development. In the case of a more advanced man, who was already conscious in the causal body, he would put himself down *consciously* into the thought-image provided for him by a friend in devachan, as into an additional mental body, and work through it with definite intention. If he happened to acquire additional knowledge he could thus directly and intentionally communicate to this friend. In this way the Masters work on such of Their pupils as take the heaven-life, and alter their characters immensely.

A man who makes for himself an image of a Master is thus able to benefit enormously from the influence which the Master is able to pour down into it, and to receive definite teaching and help.

Two friends may know far more of each other at the mental level, than they ever could when physically alive, because each has now only the one veil, that of the mental body, cast over his individuality. If a man in devachan has known only one side of his friend during physical life, it will be only through that side that the friend can express himself in the heaven world. But, although he is largely confined to that side, he can express that aspect of himself much more fully and satisfactorily than ever before; the expression, in fact, is fuller than the man now in devachan was ever able to see on the lower planes.

We have already seen that an ordinary man in devachan is living in a shell of his own thoughts; he has thus shut himself off absolutely from the rest of the world, i.e., both from the mental plane and from the lower planes. But, although he is shut away from the full enjoyment of the possibilities of the mental world, he is not in the slightest degree conscious of any curtailment of his activities or his feelings. On the contrary, he is filled with bliss to the very utmost of which he is capable, and it is to him incredible that there can be any greater joy than that which he is himself experiencing.

Thus, although he has shut himself within certain limits, he is quite unconscious of those limits, and within them he has all that he can possibly desire or think. He has surrounded himself with images of his friends, and through those images he is actually in closer contact with his friends than he has ever been on any other plane.

The man in devachan by no means forgets that there is such a thing as suffering, because he remembers clearly his last life; but he understands now many things that were not clear when he was on the physical plane, and the delight of the present is for him so great that sorrow seems to him almost a dream.

The shell on the mental plane may be compared to the shell of an egg on the physical plane. The only way to get anything into the shell of the egg, without breaking it, would be to pour it in from a higher dimension, or to find a force whose vibrations are sufficiently fine to penetrate between the particles of the shell without disturbing them. The same is true of the mental shell; it cannot be penetrated by any vibrations of matter of its own level, but the finer vibrations which belong to the ego can pass through it without disturbing it in the least; i.e., it can be acted upon freely from above, but not from below.

From this follows two effects : [1] vibrations sent out from the mental body of the man in the shell cannot strike directly upon the mental body of his friend, nor can he generate a thought-form which could travel through space and attach itself to the friend in the ordinary way. This could happen only if the man were able to move freely and consciously about the mental plane, which of course he cannot do; [2] the thoughts of his friend cannot reach the man in his devachanic shell, as they do in ordinary life on the physical or astral plane.

We see, therefore, that all the difficulties produced by the mental shell round a man in devachan are completely overcome by nature" method of the direct action of the ego on the thought-image which the man has created.

It follows also from the conditions of man in devachan that he can no longer be recalled to earth by Spiritualistic methods.

In spite of men in devachan being not readily accessible to influence from without, nevertheless one who can pass into the mental world in full consciousness can affect those in devachan to some extent. Thus he could flood them with thoughts of affection, for example, and although these thoughts may not be able so far to penetrate the shells as to make those within the shells conscious of the author of the thoughts, yet the stream of affection can act on the occupants of the shells much as the warmth of the sun can operate upon the germ within the egg, hastening its fructification and intensifying any pleasurable sensations it may be supposed to have.

If a man is an agnostic or a materialist, his disbelief in a future life does not in the least prevent him from experiencing astral or mental life just the same as anyone else; for a man's disbelief in a future existence clearly

cannot alter facts in nature. If a man has lived an unselfish life, the forces which he has generated must work themselves out, and this can take place only on the mental plane, ie., in devachan.

There is, of course, no fatigue in devachan; it is only the physical body that ever becomes tired. When we speak of mental fatigue, it is the brain and not the mind that is tired.

The fact that our minds can grasp three dimensions only, whereas there are four dimensions on the astral plane, and five on the mental plane, makes it difficult to describe exactly the position in space of those who have left physical life. Some tend to hover round their earthly homes, in order to keep in touch with their friends of the physical life and the places which they know; others, on the other hand, have a tendency to float away and to find for themselves, as if by specific gravity, a level much further removed from the surface of the earth.

Thus, for example, the average person passing into heaven-life, tends to float to a considerable distance above the surface of the earth, although on the other hand, some of such people are drawn to our level. Still, broadly speaking, the inhabitants of the heaven-world may be thought of as living in a sphere or zone round the earth.

For all but very highly advanced persons the heaven-life is absolutely necessary, because it is only under its conditions that aspirations can be developed into faculty, and experiences into wisdom. The progress which is thus made by the soul is far greater than would be possible if by some miracle the man was enabled to remain in physical incarnation for the entire period.

But for the advanced man who is making rapid progress it is sometimes possible to give up the life of bliss in the heaven-world –to renounce devachan, as it is sometimes called –between two incarnations, in order to return more rapidly to carry on work on the physical plane. But no man is permitted to renounce blindly that of which he is ignorant, nor to depart from the ordinary course of evolution unless and until it is certain that such a departure will be for his ultimate benefit.

The general rule is that no one may renounce devachan until he has experienced it during earth-life, ie., until he is sufficiently developed to be able to raise his consciousness to that plane and bring back with him a clear and full memory of its glory.

The reason for this is that it is the life of the personality, with all its familiar personal surroundings, which is carried on in the lower heaven-worlds, and therefore, before the renunciation can take place, the *personality* must realise clearly what it is that is being given up; the lower mind must be in accord with the higher on this subject.

To this general rule there is an apparent exception. In the one-sided and artificial condition which we call modern civilisation, people do not always develop quite regularly and normally; cases are to be found in which a considerable amount of consciousness on the mental plane has been acquired, and duly linked on to the *astral life*, yet no knowledge of it ever gets through into the *physical brain* at all.

Such cases are very rare, though they undoubtedly exist. They are not however, exceptions to the principle embodied in the general rule, viz., that the *personality* must make the renunciation. For in these cases, the astral life would be one of full and perfect consciousness for the personality, even though no memory of it ever penetrated into the purely physical consciousness. Thus the renunciation is made by the personality, but through the astral consciousness instead of through the physical, as in most instances. Such cases would be unlikely to occur except among those who were at least probationary pupils of a Master.

A man who wishes to perform the great feat of renouncing devachan must work with intense earnestness to make himself a worthy instrument in the hands of Those who help the world, and must throw himself with devoted fervour into labour for the spiritual good of others.

A man sufficiently advanced to be permitted to "renounce his devachan" would clearly have enjoyed an extremely long heaven-life; he is then able to expend this reserve of force in quite another direction, for the benefit of humanity, thus taking a part, however small, in the work of the Nirmânakâyas.

When a pupil has decided to do this, he waits upon the astral plane until a suitable incarnation can be arranged for him by his Master. Before the attempt can be made, permission of a very high authority must be obtained. Even when this is granted, so strong is the force of natural law, that it is said the pupil must be careful to confine himself to the astral plane, lest if once, even for a moment, he touched the devachanic plane, he might be swept as by an irresistible current into the line of normal evolution again.

In some cases, though these are rare, the man is enabled to take an adult body whose previous tenant has no further use for it, but naturally it is not often that a suitable body is available.

An animal that has attained individualisation, after his death on the physical and astral planes, has usually a very prolonged, though often somewhat dreamy life in the lower heaven-world. His condition is sometimes called "dozing" consciousness, and is analogous to that of a man on the same level, though with far less mental activity. He is surrounded by his own thought-images, even though he may be but dreamily conscious of them, and these will of course include images of his earth-friends in their very best and most sympathetic moods. These images will of course awaken response from the egos of his friends in the usual way. The animal will remain in the condition described until in some future world he assumes the human form.

Individualisation, by means of which an animal rises to the human kingdom, is attained by association with men, the intelligence and affection of the animal being developed to the degree necessary by his close relationship with his human friend. But we have already dealt with this matter in Chapter XIII.

CHAPTER XIII

THE FIRST HEAVEN : SEVENTH SUB-PLANE

Although, as we shall see presently, each of the four lower heavens has its own characteristic, it must not be supposed that a man divides his heaven-life between the various levels, according to the characteristics which he may have developed. On the contrary, as was mentioned briefly before, a man awakens to consciousness in devachan on that level which best corresponds to the degree of his development; and on that level he spends the whole of his life in the mental body. The reasons for this is that the higher level may always *include* the qualities of the lower, as well as those peculiar to itself; and when it does so its inhabitants almost invariably have these qualities in fuller measure than the souls on the lower level.

The lowest heaven, that on the seventh sub-plane, has for its principal characteristic that of affection for family and friends; that affection must, of course, be unselfish, but it is usually somewhat narrow. It must not however, be supposed that love is confined to the lowest heaven, but rather that this form of affection is the highest of which those who find themselves on the seventh level are capable. On the higher levels love of a far nobler and grander type is to be found.

It may be useful to describe a few typical examples of the inhabitants of the seventh sub-plane. One was that of a small tradesman, honest and respectable, but of no intellectual development or religious feeling.

Although he had probably attended church regularly, religion had been to him a sort of dim cloud which he did not really understand which had no connection with the business of everyday life, and which was never taken into account in deciding its problems. Whilst he had, therefore, no depth of devotion, he had nevertheless warm affection for his family. They were constantly in his mind, and he worked in his shop far more for them than for himself. His surroundings in devachan would not be of a very reined type; but nevertheless he would be as intensely happy as he would be capable of being and he would be developing unselfish characteristics which would be built into his soul as permanent qualities.

Other typical cases were that of a man who had died while his only daughter was still young. In his devachan she

was always with him, and at her best, while he was continually weaving all sorts of beautiful pictures of her future. Another case was that of a young girl who was always absorbed in contemplating the manifold perfections of her father, and planning little surprises and fresh pleasures for him. Another was a Greek woman who was marvellously happy with her three children, one of them a beautiful boy, whom she delighted in imagining as the victor in the Olympic games.

A striking characteristic of this sub-plane for the last few centuries has been a very large number of Romans, Carthaginians, and Englishmen found there, this being due to the fact that among men of these nations the principal unselfish activity found its outlet through family affection. Comparatively few Hindus or Buddhists are on this sub-plane, because in their case real religious feeling usually enters more immediately into their daily lives, and consequently takes them to a higher level.

Among the cases observed, there was an almost infinite variety, their different degrees of advancement being distinguishable by varying degrees of luminosity, while differences of colour indicate the qualities which the persons had developed. Some were lovers who had died in the full strength of their affection, and so were always occupied with the one person they loved, to the entire exclusion of all others. Others there were who had been almost savages, yet who had had some touch of unselfish action.

In all these cases, the only element in the activity of their personal lives which could have expressed itself on the mental plane, was affection. In most cases observed on this level, the thought-images are very far from perfect, and consequently the egos of the friends concerned can express themselves but poorly through them. But even at the worst, as explained in a previous chapter, that expression is fuller and more satisfying than it ever was in physical life.

For those on this lowest level of the heaven-world there is not much material out of which faculty can be moulded, and their life is but very slightly progressive. Their family affections will be nourished and a little widened, and they will be re-born with a somewhat improved emotional nature, with more tendency to recognise and respond to a higher level.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE SECOND HEAVEN : SIXTH SUB-PLANE

The dominant characteristic of the sixth sub-plane of the heaven-world may be described as anthropomorphic religious devotion. There appears to be some correspondence between this level of the heaven-world and the second astral sub-plane, the difference being that on the astral there is invariably an element of selfishness, of bargaining, in the religious devotion, whereas in the heaven-world the devotion is of course entirely free from any such taint.

On the other hand, this phase of devotion, which consists essentially in the perpetual adoration of a personal deity, must be distinguished from those still higher forms which find their expression in performing some definite work for the deity's sake. A few examples will show these distinctions.

A fairly large number of entities on this level are drawn from oriental religions, only those being included whose devotion is pure, but comparatively unreasoning and unintelligent. Worshippers of Vishnu, and a few of Shiva, are found here, each wrapped up in a cocoon of his own thoughts, alone with his god, and oblivious of the rest of mankind except in so far as his affections may associate those whom he loved on earth with his adoration of his deity. A Vishnavite was observed wholly absorbed in the ecstatic worship of the very image of Vishnu to which he had made offerings during earth-life.

Women form a very large majority of the inhabitants of this sub-plane, and afford one of its most characteristic examples. Among others, there was a Hindu woman who had glorified her husband into a divine being, and who

also thought of the child Krishna as playing with her own children; but while these latter were thoroughly human and real, the child Krishna was obviously nothing but the semblance of a blue wooden image galvanised into life. Krishna also appeared in her heaven as an effeminate young man playing a flute; but she was not in the least confused by this double manifestation.

Another woman, a worshipper of Shiva, looked upon her husband as a manifestation of her god, so that the one seemed to be constantly changing into the other.

Some Buddhists are also found on this level, but apparently only those less instructed ones who regard the Buddha rather as an object of adoration than as a great teacher.

Many Christians are found here; an illiterate Roman Catholic peasant, for example, full of unintellectual devotion, or an earnest or sincere "soldier" of the Salvation Army. An Irish peasant was seen absorbed in the deepest adoration of the Virgin Mary, whom he imaged as standing on the moon, but holding out her hands and speaking to him. A mediaeval monk was observed in ecstatic contemplation of Christ crucified, and the intensity of his yearning love and pity was such that, as he watched the blood dropping from the wounds of the figure of his Christ, the stigmata reproduced themselves upon his own mental body.

Another man thought of his Christ only as glorified on his throne, with the crystal sea before him, and all around a vast multitude of worshippers, among whom he himself stood with his wife and family. Although his affection for his relatives was very deep, yet his thoughts were more occupied in adoration of the Christ, though his conception of his deity was so material that he imaged him as constantly changing kaleidoscopically backwards and forwards between the form of a man and that of a lamb bearing the flag, as often represented in church windows.

An interesting case was that of a Spanish nun who had died at about the age of nineteen. In her heaven she imagined herself accompanying the Christ in his life as recounted in the gospels, and after his crucifixion taking care of the Virgin Mary. Her pictures of the scenery and costumes of Palestine were entirely inaccurate, the Saviour and his disciples wearing the dress of Spanish peasants, while the hills round Jerusalem were mountains clothed with vineyards, and the olive trees were hung with grey Spanish moss. She thought of herself as eventually martyred for her faith and ascending into heaven, but yet only to live over and over again this life in which she so delighted.

A child who had died at the age of seven was occupied in re-enacting in the heaven-world the religious stories which his Irish nurse had told him. He loved to think of himself as playing with the infant Jesus, and helping him to make those clay sparrows which the power of the Christ is fabled to have brought o life and caused to fly.

Even if a man is a materialist and agnostic, he will still have a heaven-world, provided he had been capable of devotion. For deep unselfish family affection, as well as earnest philanthropic effort, are also great outpourings of energy, which must produce their result, and can produce it nowhere but on the mental plane.

It will be seen that blind unreasoning devotion, of which examples have been given, does not at any time raise its votaries to any great spiritual heights; but of course they are entirely happy and fully satisfied, for they receive the highest which they are capable of appreciating. Nor is such a heaven-life without a very good effect on their future career. For although no amount of mere devotion will ever develop intellect, yet it does produce an increased capacity for a higher form of devotion, and in most cases it leads also to purity of life. A person, therefore, who enjoys a heaven, such as has been described, is not likely to make rapid progress, yet he is at least guarded from many dangers; for it is improbable that in his next birth he will fall into any of the grosser sins, or be drawn away from his devotional aspirations into a merely worldly life of avarice, ambition, or dissipation.

Nevertheless a survey of the sixth sub-plane distinctly emphasises the desirability of following the advice of St. Peter: "Add to your faith - virtue, and to virtue knowledge.

CHAPTER XXV

THE THIRD HEAVEN : FIFTH SUB-PLANE

The chief characteristic of this level of the heaven-world may be described as devotion expressing itself in active work. It is especially the plane for the working out of great schemes and designs unrealised on earth, of great organisations inspired by religious devotion, and usually having for their object some philanthropic purpose.

It must however, be borne in mind that as we rise higher, greater complexity and variety are introduced, so that many variations and exceptions occur which do not so rapidly range themselves under the general heading for the plane as a whole.

A typical case, somewhat above average, was that of a deeply religious man who was found carrying out a grand scheme, which he had himself devised, for the amelioration of the condition of the poorer classes.

The scheme comprised amalgamation of businesses in order to effect economies, high wages, the provision of cottage and gardens, and profit sharing. He hoped that this demonstration of the practical side of Christianity would win many to his own faith, out of gratitude for the material benefits they had received.

A somewhat similar case was that of an Indian prince who had tried to model his life and methods of government, while on earth, on the example of the divine hero-king Rama. On earth many of his schemes had failed, but in his heaven-life everything went well, Rama himself personally advising and directing the work, and receiving perpetual adoration from all his devoted subjects.

A curious case of personal religious work was that of a nun, who had belonged to a working order. In her heaven, she was constantly occupied in feeding the hungry, healing the sick, clothing and helping the poor, the peculiarity of each case being that each person, to whom she administered, at once changed into the appearance of Christ, whom she then worshipped with fervent adoration.

An instructive case was that of two intensely religious sisters, one of them a cripple, the other having devoted herself to tending her. On earth they had often discussed and planned the religious and philanthropic work they would carry out if they were able to do so. In the heaven-world, each is the most prominent figure in the heaven of the other, the cripple being well and strong, while each thinks of the other as working with her in carrying out the unrealised wishes of her earth life. In these cases the only difference that death has made is to eliminate disease and suffering, and to render easy the work which before had been impossible.

On this plane are found the higher type of sincere and devoted missionaries, engaged in the congenial occupation of converting multitudes of people to the particular religion which they advocated.

There occur also on this plane some cases of devotees of art, who follow it for its own sake, or regard it as an offering to their deity, not thinking of its effect on their fellows.

Artists who pursued art, for the sake of fame and self-gratification, would not of course find their way to this plane at all. On the other hand, those who regarded their faculty as a great power entrusted to them for the spiritual elevation of their fellows would reach a heaven even higher than the one we are now considering.

As an example, mention may be made of a musician of very religious temperament who regarded all his labour of love simply as an offering to the Christ, knowing nothing of the magnificent display of sound and colour which his compositions produced on the mental plane. His enthusiasm would not, of course be wasted, for, without his knowledge, it brought joy and help to many, and its results would certainly be to give him increased devotion and greater musical capacity in his next birth. But without the still wider aspiration to help humanity this kind of heaven-life might repeat itself almost indefinitely.

The student will perceive that the three lower heavens - on the seventh, sixth, and fifth sub-planes - are concerned with the working out of devotion to *personalities*, either to one's family and friends, or to a personal deity, rather than the wider devotion to humanity for its own sake, which, as we shall see, finds its expression on the next sub-plane.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE FOURTH HEAVEN : FOURTH SUB-PLANE

The Fourth Heaven, on the fourth sub-plane, is on the highest of the lower rûpa levels. Its activities are so varied that it is difficult to group them under a single characteristic. They may best be arranged into four main divisions:-

- [1] Unselfish pursuit of spiritual knowledge
- [2] High philosophic or scientific thought
- [3] Literary or artistic ability, exercised unselfishly
- [4] Service for the sake of service

A few examples of each of these classes will make them more readily comprehensible.

[1] *Unselfish pursuit of spiritual knowledge.*

Most of the inhabitants of this class are drawn from those religions in which the necessity of obtaining spiritual knowledge is recognised. Thus, of Buddhists, there are found here those more intelligent followers who looked upon the Buddha as a teacher, rather than as a being to be adored, and whose supreme aspiration was to sit at his feet and learn.

In their heaven-life their wish is fulfilled; for the thought-image which they have made of the Buddha is no mere empty form; through it shines the wonderful wisdom, power and love of that greatest of earth's teachers. They are therefore acquiring fresh knowledge and wider views, the effect of which on their next life cannot but be most marked. They will not perhaps remember any individual facts, though when such facts are presented to them in a subsequent life, they will grasp them readily, and intuitively recognise their truth. Furthermore, the result of the teaching will be to build into the ego a strong tendency to take broader and more philosophical views on all such subjects.

The effect of such a heaven-life is to hasten considerably the evolution of the ego. Hence the enormous advantage gained by those who accepted the guidance of living and powerful teachers.

A similar result, in lesser degree, accrues to a man who followed the teachings of a great and spiritual writer, and made of that writer an ideal figure. The ego of the writer will enter into the student's heaven-life and, by virtue of his own developed power, vivify the mental image of himself, thus being able further to illuminate his written teachings.

Many Hindus find their heaven on this level, as also a few of the more advanced Sufis and Parsis, and some of the early Gnostics. But, except for a few Sufis and Gnostics, neither Mohammedanism nor Christianity seems to raise its followers to this level; some, however, who nominally follow these religions may be carried to this sub-plane by the presence in their character of qualities which do not depend upon the teachings peculiar to their own religion.

Here are found also earnest students of Occultism, who are not yet sufficiently advanced to be permitted to "renounce" their devachan [see p. 203]. These include students of schools of occultism other than that which is best known to most members of the Theosophical Society.

An interesting case was observed, where a person who had fallen into an attitude of unworthy and unjustifiable distrust of the motives of her old friend and teacher, had thereby shut out to a considerable extent the higher influence and teaching, which otherwise she might have enjoyed in her heaven-life. The influence and teaching were in no way withheld from her, but her own mental attitude had rendered her to some extent unreceptive of them, although she herself was quite unconscious of this. A wealth of love, strength and knowledge lay at her hand, but her own ingratitude had sadly crippled her power to accept it.

[2] *High Philosophic or Scientific Thought.*

This class does *not* include those philosophers who spend their time in verbal argument and hair-splitting, for that is a form of discussion which has its roots in selfishness and conceit, and can therefore never help towards a real understanding of the facts of the universe, not produce results that can work themselves out on the mental plane.

We find here rather those noble and unselfish thinkers who seek insight and knowledge only for the purpose of enlightening and helping their fellows.

A typical example was that of a later follower of the neo-platonic system, who was occupied in unravelling the mysteries of that school of thought, and in endeavouring to understand its bearing upon human life and development.

Another case was that of an astronomer whose studies had led him to Pantheism. He was still pursuing his studies with reverence, and was gaining knowledge from those orders of devas, through whom on this plane the majestic cyclic movement of the stellar influences seems to express itself in ever-changing coruscations of living light. He was lost in contemplation of a vast panorama of whirling nebulae and gradually-forming systems and worlds, and striving to form some idea of the shape of the universe. His thoughts surrounded him, shaped as stars, and he listened with joy to the stately rhythm of the music that pealed out in mighty chorales from the moving orbs.

Scientists such as this astronomer would return to earth as great discoverers, with unerring intuitions of the mysterious ways of nature.

[3] *Literary or Artistic Effort exercised unselfishly.*

On this level are found our greatest musicians. Mozart, Beethoven, Bach, Wagner and others are still flooding the heaven-world with harmony far more glorious than they were able to produce when on earth.

Streams of divine music pour into them from the higher regions, to be specialised by them and made their own, and then to be sent forth through all the plane in a tide of melody which adds to the bliss of all around. Both those who are functioning in full consciousness on this plane, and disembodied entities of this level, each of whom is wrapped up in his own thought-cloud, are deeply affected by the ennobling influence of this music.

Painters and sculptors are here constantly making, by their thought, artificial elementals in all kinds of lovely forms, which they send forth for the delight and encouragement of their fellow-men.

These beautiful conceptions may also in many cases be grasped by the minds of artists still in the flesh, acting as inspirations to them.

An interesting figure seen on this level was that of a chorister who had died young. He had little save the one great gift of song, but he had used that gift worthily, trying to be the voice of the people to heaven, and of heaven to the people, and ever longing to know more music, and render it more worthily, for the Church's sake. In his heaven-life his wish was bearing fruit, and over him was bending the quaint angular figure of St. Cecilia, formed by his thought of the picture of her in a stained glass window. This thought-form was vivified by one of the archangels of the celestial hierarchy of song, and through it he taught the chorister a grander strain of music than ever earth has known.

Another example was that of a man who had on earth refused to use his literary power merely to earn a living for himself, but had instead written a book which none would read; he had been alone all his life, and eventually died of sorrow and starvation. In his heaven-life he was also in solitude, but he saw stretching before him the Utopia of which he had dreamed, and the vast impersonal multitudes whom he had longed to serve. The joy of their joy surged back to him and made his solitude a heaven.

[4] *Service for the sake of service.*

On this level are found many who have rendered service for the sake of service, rather than because they desired to please any particular deity. They are engaged in working out with full knowledge and calm wisdom, vast schemes of beneficence, magnificent plans of world improvement, and at the same time they are maturing powers with which to carry them out in the future on the lower plane of physical life.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE MENTAL PLANE

It is the function of mental matter to vibrate in response to the modes of the Spirit working as intellect, just as astral matter plays a similar part for desire and emotion, and as buddhic matter responds to the Spirit working as intuition. Hence the mental plane is that part or aspect of nature which belongs to consciousness working as thought; not to mind working through the physical brain, but to mind working in its own world, unencumbered with physical matter.

The five lower planes of nature correspond to the five "Elements" of the ancients as follows:

:

Planes or Worlds		"Elements" of the ancients	
Sanskrit	English	Sanskrit	English
Âtmâ	Will	Âkâsha	Ether or sky
Buddhi	Intuition	Vâyu	Air
Manas	Mind	Tejas or Agni	Fire
Kâma	Feeling	Apas or jala	Water
Sthûla	Physical Life	Prithivî	Earth

In certain Hindu books there is another classification, in which the mind is grouped with the elements. The Hindu has a way of looking at things from a very high standpoint, often, apparently, from that of the Monad, and to him the mind is but an instrument of consciousness. Thus, in the seventh chapter of the Gîtâ, Shri Krishna says: "Earth, water, fire, air, ether, manas, buddhi, and ahamkâra –these are the eightfold divisions of my manifestation". (Prakriti) A little later on she speaks of these eight as "my lower manifestation".

The mental world is the world of the real man, the very word man deriving from the Sanskrit root man, the root of the verb "to think": thus *man* means *thinker*: he is named by his most characteristic attribute, intelligence.

The mental world is thus the land of our birth, the realm to which in truth we belong, for our native atmosphere is that of ideas, not of physical phenomena.

When man, the Thinker, became incarnate in the physical vehicle built for his reception, the senseless animal became the thinking being by virtue of the Manas which entered into and dwelt in him. Thus man became clothed in his "coat of skin" after his fall into physical matter, in order that he might eat of the Tree of Knowledge and thus become a "God". Hence man is the link between the Divine and the animal.

The mental world is of peculiar interest, not only because man, after the mind is fairly developed, spends here nearly all his time, dipping down into the physical world only for brief snatches of mortal life, but also because it is the meeting ground of the higher and lower consciousness.

In English the word "mind" stands both for the intellectual consciousness itself, and also for the effects produced on the physical brain by that consciousness. In occultism however, we must conceive of the intellectual consciousness as an individual entity, a being, the vibrations of whose life are thoughts, expressed not as physical words, but as images.

The real man is Manas, the Thinker, working on the higher or causal levels of the mental plane. Only a small section of his vibrations, and even that very imperfectly, can be reproduced in the comparatively coarse physical materials, the physical brain and nervous system being able to reproduce but a small fragment of the vast series of mental vibrations set up by the Thinker in his own world.

Very receptive brains respond up to the point of what we call great intellectual power; exceptionally unresponsive brains respond up to the point of what we call idiocy; exceptionally responsive brains up to the point of what we call genius. The so-called mental powers of each man thus represent the degree of sensitiveness of his brain to the millions of thought-waves from the Thinker to which it can respond.

Thus consciousness working in the brain is illuminated, from above, by ideas that are not fabricated from materials supplied by the physical world, but are reflected into it directly from the Universal Mind [see below]. The great "laws of thought" regulate all thinking, and the very act of thinking reveals their pre-existence, as it is done by them and under them, and is impossible without them.

Taking a still wider view of the mental plane, it may be described as that which reflects the Universal Mind in Nature, the plane which, in our little system, corresponds with the Great Mind in the Kosmos. This Great Mind is Mahat, the Third Logos, or Divine Creative Intelligence, the Brâhma of the Hindus, the Mandjusri of the Northern Buddhists, the Holy Spirit of the Christians.

The Universal Mind is that in which all archetypically exists; it is the source of beings, the fount of fashioning energies, the treasure-house in which are stored up all the archetypal forms which are brought forth and elaborated in lower kinds of matter during the evolution of the universe. These are the fruits of past universes brought over as seeds for unfoldment in the present universe.

It is on the higher part of the mental plane that exist the archetypal ideas which are now in course of concrete evolution. In its lower regions these are worked out into successive forms, to be duly reproduced in the astral and physical worlds.

An example of these ideas is that of the small artificial elementals, which may sometimes be seen hanging around a plant or flower, all through the time that the buds are forming. These are thought-forms of the great devas who supervise the evolution of the vegetable kingdom, and are created for the special purpose of carrying out their ideas connected with the plants and flowers. Such an elemental usually takes the form of an etheric model of the flower itself, or of a little creature which gradually builds the flower into the shape and colour of which the deva has thought. When the work is done, the power of the elemental is exhausted, and the matter of which it is composed dissolves into the general store of such matter.

These artificial elementals must not, of course, be confused with nature-spirits [see *The Astral Body* p. 181], which

are frequently seen playing about flowers.

Before the Manu of a Chain or Round commences the task appointed for Him, He examines the part of that mighty thought-form of the Logos which refers to His work, and brings it down to some level within easy reach for constant reference. The same thing is done at a lower level by the Manu of each World and of each Root-Race. Each Manu then builds as nearly as He can to the model He has before Him, usually approaching the perfection required by degrees, the earlier efforts at the formation of a race, for example, being often only partially successful.

At the beginning of the present – [fourth]- round, all the archetypes for humanity were brought down, including those races which have not yet come into existence. From an examination of these, it is possible to see what the men of the future will be like. They will have finer vehicles in every way, and will be distinctly more beautiful in appearance, expressing in their forms the spiritual forces.

It was on Globe A in the fourth round that mind became definite on the lower mental level, and so we may say that it is in this round man began really to think. The result at first was by no means good. In previous rounds he had not been sufficiently developed to originate thought-forms to any great extent, and so the elemental essence of the globes had been affected only by the thoughts of the devas, who left everything harmonious and peaceful. But when man began to interject his selfish and jarring thoughts, this comfortable condition was very largely disturbed. Strife, unrest and disharmony were introduced, and the animal kingdom drew decisively apart from man, and began to feel fear and hatred towards him.

On Globe A there were also the group-souls of animals and vegetables, and even minerals. It is, of course, difficult for us to conceive what a mineral could be on the mental plane; it would correspond to our thought of a mineral; but the thought-form which exists there is that of the Manu, and is moulded by a power altogether beyond comparison with that of our mentality.

As we saw in Chapter II, in the natural course of events, the present fourth round should be devoted chiefly to the cultivation of the emotions; the next round, the fifth, should be that of intellectual advancement. We are, however, a long way in advance of the programme marked out for us. This advance is entirely due to those august Beings variously called the Lords of the Flame, the Children of the Fire-Mist, the Lords of Venus, who came to this earth from the planet Venus.

Most of them stayed with us only through that critical period of our history; a few still remain to hold the highest offices in the Great White Brotherhood, until the time when men of our own evolution shall be able to relieve Them of Their high office.

As was explained in Chapters VII and VIII, the materials of the mental plane are capable of combining, under the impulse of thought-vibrations, and can give rise to any combination which thought can construct. Just as iron can be made into a spade or a sword, so can mental matter be shaped into thought-forms to help or to injure. In this region, thought and action are thus one and the same thing; matter is the obedient servant of life, adapting itself to every creative impulse.

The mental plane, being that of thought itself, the very home of thought, is thus far nearer reality than any lower plane. For everything that is material is buried and hidden in matter, whatever of reality it may possess being far less obvious and recognisable than it would be when regarded from a higher standpoint.

The whole of our Solar System being a manifestation of the Logos, every particle in it is part of His vehicles. Hence all the mental matter in the system constitutes His mental body.

This, of course, comprises not only the mental world belonging to each of the physical planets, but also those belonging to each of the astral planets, and in addition, the purely mental planets, usually called, in our Chain of worlds, globes A and G.

It may be noted, parenthetically, that the man of globe A in the First Round can hardly be called a man at all; he is a thought; he is what will some day be a mind-body –the germ of a mind-body, bearing perhaps the same relation to its later possibilities as the embryonic form of an infant after the first month bears to the fully developed human body. At this early stage he has marvellously little consciousness

The matter described above as composing the mental body of the Solar Logos also composes the mental bodies of the seven Planetary Logoi, which are centres of force within the Solar logos.

Now in every man's mental body there are particles belonging to each one of the seven Planetary Logoi, but the proportions vary infinitely, these proportions determining the *type* of each person.

In the seven Planetary Logoi certain psychic changes periodically occur, and these changes are bound to affect the bodies of every man in the world, because the materials of his bodies are also the materials of the Planetary Logoi. The degree to which he will be affected will, of course, depend upon the proportion in his bodies of the type of matter appropriate to that particular Logos. Hence the importance to man of the motions of these Planetary Spirits –and the ultimate rationale of astrological science.

The influences belonging to these great types affect, amongst other things, the elemental essence which, as we have seen [see p. 6], is vividly active in the astral and mental bodies of men. Hence any unusual excitement of any of these types must affect to some extent either man's emotions or his mind, or both, to a degree corresponding to the amount of the particular type of essence concerned which he possesses in his vehicles. Such influences in themselves are no more good nor evil than any other natural force; they may be helpful or hurtful according to the use we make of them.

It is important to realise that any pressure these influences may bring to bear on man cannot dominate his will in the slightest degree. The most it can do is in some cases to make it easier, or more difficult, for that will to act along certain lines. A man of iron determination, or a student of occultism, may put these influences aside as a negligible quantity; for men of weaker will it may sometimes be worth while to know at what moment this or that force can most advantageously be applied. "The wise man rules his stars: the fool obeys them".

Whilst each physical globe has its physical, astral and mental planes, all inter-penetrating one another, and therefore occupying the same space, all of these are yet quite apart, and do not communicate with the corresponding planes of any globe. [It is only at and beyond the buddhic level that there is a condition common to all the planets of our chain].

Notwithstanding the above, there is a condition of the atomic matter of each of these planes which is cosmic in its extent. In fact, the seven atomic-sub-planes of our system, taken apart from the rest, may be said to constitute the lowest cosmic plane, sometimes called the cosmic-prakritic. Thus our mental plane is the third sub-division of the lowest cosmic plane.

Regarded in another way, the atomic part of our mental plane is also the lowest sub-plane of the mental body of the Planetary Logos.

The astral plane of the earth extends to a little less than the mean distance of the moon, the earth and the moon being nearly 240,000 miles apart; the mental plane of the earth, which is of course a definite globe, extends still further into space than does the astral plane, bearing about the same proportion to the astral as does the astral to the physical.

Only that portion of the atomic matter of the astral and mental planes which is in an entirely free condition is co-extensive with the interplanetary ether [which consists of ultimate physical atoms in their normal and uncompressed state]. Consequently a person can no more pass from planet to planet of our chain in his astral or

mental body than he can in his physical body. In the causal body, when very highly developed, this achievement is possible, though not with the ease and rapidity with which it can be done at the buddhic level.

Furthermore, the detailed sight of other planets would not be possible for any system of clairvoyance connected with the mental or any lower plane, though a good deal of information could be obtained by exercising a high magnifying power ,[see p. 116].

Matter of the lower planes is never carried over from planet to planet. When, for example, we leave this planet in order to incarnate upon Mercury, only the egos will be carried over. Those egos will draw round themselves mental and astral matter belonging to their new planet, and will obtain physical bodies provided by those who are already inhabiting Mercury.

The matter of the mental plane is divided into seven grades of fineness, precisely as is that of the astral and the physical planes. For want of other terms these must for the present be denoted by the terms given to the seven grades of physical matter, i.e., solid, liquid, gaseous, etc. The highest or finest sub-division consists, of course, of ultimate mental atoms.

An ultimate mental atom contains 49 to the 4th or 5,764,801 [roughly five and three quarter million] "bubbles in koilon".

The three higher grades of mental matter are called arûpa, or formless; the four lower grades are termed rûpa, or having form. The distinction is a real one, being related to the divisions on the mind itself.

In the rûpa levels the vibrations of consciousness give rise to images or pictures, every thought appearing as a living shape; in the arûpa levels consciousness seems rather to send out flashes or streams of living energy, which does not body itself into distinct images, while it remains on its own levels, but which, when it rushes into the lower mental levels, sets up a variety of forms, all linked by some common condition. In other words, the arûpa levels are concerned with the expression of abstract thoughts, ideas, principles, and the rûpa levels with concrete thoughts and particular ideas.

Words being largely symbols of images, and belonging to the workings of the lower mind in the brain, it follows that it is almost, if not quite, impossible to describe in words the workings of abstract thought. For the arûpa levels pertain to the pure reason, which does not work within the narrow limits of language.

Another broad distinction between the rûpa and the arûpa levels of the mental plane is that on the rûpa levels a man lives in his own thoughts, and fully identifies himself with his personality in the life which he has recently quitted. On the arûpa levels he is simply the reincarnating ego who, provided he is sufficiently developed on that level to know anything at all, understands, at least to some extent, the evolution upon which he is engaged, and the work that he has to do.

Mental matter being so much finer than either astral or physical matter, it follows that the life-forces on the mental plane are enormously increased in activity. Mental matter is in constant, ceaseless motion, taking form under every thrill of life and adapting itself readily to every change of motion. Even astral matter seems relatively heavy and lustreless. The vibrations of mental matter are as much more rapid than physical vibrations as vibrations of light are more rapid than physical vibrations as vibrations of light are more rapid than those of sound.

We might say that mental matter moves actually *with* thought; astral matter moves so quickly after thought that the ordinary observer can scarcely note any difference; etheric matter, of course, does not obey thought as rapidly as does astral matter.

The student will of course realise that just as each particle of physical ether floats in a sea of astral matter, so each astral particle floats in a mental ocean.

In spite of the idea, entertained by many people, that it is easier to deal with things on the physical plane than with those on the astral or mental planes, the reverse is the truth. For the very fineness of mental matter, and its ready response to mental impulses, makes it far easier to move, and to direct, by the action of the will, than either astral or physical matter.

In [The Voice of the Silence](#), three Halls are spoken of –the Hall of Ignorance; the Hall of Learning; the Hall of Wisdom. It seems probable that the Hall of Ignorance stands for the physical plane; the Hall of Learning for the astral and lower mental planes; and the Hall of Wisdom for the planes of higher mind and buddhi.

On the four lower levels of the mental plane, some degree of illusion is still possible; but less it appears, for the man who can function there in full consciousness during physical life than for the undeveloped person after death, as was explained in the Chapters on Devachan.

The lower mental plane is thus still a region of personality and error; in it, as well as in the astral world, there is a serpent coiled under every flower; for if personal and foolish desires infest the one, pride and prejudice inhabit the other.

On the higher mental plane, though there will be much that the ego does not know, what he does know he knows correctly. With the life of the [causal body](#), however, we are not directly concerned in this volume.

There is a radical difference between the lower and higher mental planes. In the lower mental, matter is dominant; it is the first thing that strikes the eye; and consciousness shines with difficulty through the forms. But in the higher planes, life is the prominent thing, and forms are there only for its purposes. The difficulty in the lower plane is to give life expression in the forms, but in the higher it is quite the reverse –to hold and give form to the flood of life. It is only above the line that divides the lower from the higher mental plane that the light of consciousness is subject to no wind, and shines with its own power. Hence the symbol of a spiritual fire is very fitting for consciousness at the higher levels, as distinguished from the lower planes, where the symbol of fire burning fuel is more appropriate.

In the case of the astral plane, it is possible to give some account of its scenery; but this cannot be done for the mental plane, because the mental plane has no scenery, except such as each individual chooses to make for himself by his thought; we do not, of course, include as "scenery" other mental entities who are themselves in many cases objects of great beauty.

The conditions of the mental plane, however, are so difficult to describe in words that it would perhaps be more accurate to say that all possible scenery exists there; there is nothing conceivable of loveliness which is not there with a fullness and intensity beyond all power of imagination. But out of this splendour of living reality each man sees only that which his development enables him to perceive.

It is said to be difficult to describe the difference between the matter of the various sub-planes of the mental world, because the scribe bankrupts himself of adjectives in his attempt to describe the lowest sub-plane, and thus has no words left for the description of the higher sub-planes. All that can be said is, that as we ascend, the material becomes finer, the harmonies fuller, the light more living and transparent. There are more overtones in the sound, more delicate shades in the colours, more and new colours appear, as we rise through the sub-planes. It has been said poetically, and truly, that the light of a lower plane is darkness on the one above it.

On the highest sub-plane the matter is ensouled and vivified by an energy which flows like light from above, from the buddhic plane. As we descend through each sub-plane, the matter of each sub-plane becomes the energy of the sub-plane immediately below; more accurately, the original energy, plus the matter of the higher sub-planes, becomes the ensouling energy of the next lower sub-plane. Thus the seventh or lowest sub-plane consists of the original energy six times enclosed or veiled, and therefore by so much, weaker and less active.

The first impressions of one who enters the mental plane in full consciousness will be very much as described in Chapter XX, when dealing with a man awakening, after astral death, in devachan. He will experience intense bliss, indescribable vitality, enormously increased power, and the perfect confidence which flows from these. He finds himself in the midst of what seems to him a whole universe of ever-changing light, colour and sound. He will seem to be floating in a sea of living light, surrounded by every conceivable variety of loveliness in colour and form, the whole changing with every wave of thought that he sends out from his mind, and being indeed, as he will discover, only the expression of his thought in the matter of the plane and its elemental essence. Concrete thoughts, as we saw previously, take the shapes of their objects, while abstract ideas usually represent themselves by all kinds of perfect and most beautiful geometrical forms. In this connection it should be remembered that many thoughts, which to us on the physical plane are little more than mere abstractions, are on the mental plane concrete facts.

The feeling of freedom in the mental world is so great that in comparison with it astral life seems a state of bondage.

Anyone who wishes to abstract himself from his surroundings on the mental plane and devote himself to quiet thought, may live in a world of his own without possibility of interruption; he will also have the additional advantage of seeing all his ideas, and their consequences, full worked out, passing before him in a sort of panorama.

If, however, he wishes instead to observe the plane upon which he is, he must very carefully suspend his own thought for a time, so that he may not influence the readily impressible matter around him [see p. 114].

Having attained to that condition in which he is no longer himself the centre of radiation of that light, colour, sound and form, it has not therefore ceased to exist: on the contrary, its harmonies and coruscations are grander than ever. Presently he will perceive that he is seeing the colour-language of the devas, the expression of thought or conversation of beings far higher than himself in the scale of evolution. By experiment and practice he will also find that he can himself use this mode of expression, and thus hold converse with, and learn from, these lofty non-human entities, whom we shall describe in a later chapter.

For, as the student will recollect, a thought-form, composed of rapidly vibrating particles of mental matter, sets up vibrations all around it; and these vibrations give rise to sensations of sound and colour in any entities adapted to translate them thus.

It is possible also for a visitor to the mental plane to form round himself a huge shell, through which none of the thought or conversation of other entities can penetrate. Then holding his own mind perfectly still, he can examine the conditions inside his shell.

He is now able to perceive another, and entirely different, series of regular pulsations, which the other more artificial phenomena had obscured. These are universal, and cannot be checked or turned aside by any shell made by human power. They produce no colour or form, but flow with resistless regularity through all the matter of the plane, outwards and in again, like the exhalations and inhalations of a great breath.

There are several sets of these, clearly distinguishable from one another by volume, period of vibration, and the tone of the harmony which they bring. Grander than them all sweeps one great wave which seems the very heart-beat of the system—a wave which, welling up from unknown centres on far higher planes, pours out its life through all our world, and then draws back in its tremendous tide to That from which it came. It comes in one long undulating curve, and the sound of it is like the murmur of the sea. Yet in it and through it there echoes a ringing chant of triumph, the very music of the spheres.

A man who has once heard that glorious song of nature never quite loses it again. Even in the physical world, so dreary by comparison, he hears it always as a kind of undertone.

If the man has reached a certain degree of spiritual development, it is possible for him to merge his consciousness with the sweep of the wave and let it bear him upward to its source. But it is not wise to do this, unless a Master stands beside him to draw him back at the right moment; for otherwise its irresistible force will carry him away into

still higher planes, whose far greater glories his ego is as yet unable to sustain. He will lose consciousness, with no certainty as to when and where he will regain it.

Whilst the attainment of such unity is the ultimate object of man's evolution, he must reach that goal in full and perfect consciousness, and not drift into absorption in a state of blank unconsciousness but little removed from annihilation.

On the mental plane a man may circle the world with the speed of thought; he is at the other side of it even as he formulates the wish to be there, for the response of mental matter to thought is immediate, and it is very readily controlled by the will.

On the mental plane there is no alternation of day and night, and nothing to correspond to sleeping or waking, except of course on first entering the plane and on finally leaving it.

As the physical world is three-dimensional, and the astral world four-dimensional, so is the mental world five-dimensional. But, as was explained in *The Astral Body*, p. 165, it is probably more accurate to say that consciousness on each plane is able to appreciate the world in which it is functioning in the number of dimensions given above.

The three known forms of energy have their appropriate manifestations on every plane which our students have yet reached. Hence Fohat, Prana and Kundalini all exist on the mental plane, though at present little is known of the details of their workings.

A man in full consciousness on the mental plane will, of course, see the whole of humanity, excepting those who are living in their causal bodies only, for every man who is in physical or astral life must also possess a mental body. Those, however, who are confined in their own shells of thoughts in their heavens can scarcely be considered as companions, for reasons explained in the chapters on Devachan.

Between those who are fully conscious on the mental plane there is far closer union than is possible at any lower level. A man can no longer deceive another with regard to what he thinks, for all mental operations lie open for every one to see. Opinions or impressions can now be exchanged, not only with the quickness of thought, but also with perfect accuracy, for each now receives the exact idea of the other, clean, clear-cut, instantaneous, without having to puzzle his way through the maze of words.

The student will recollect that on the astral plane difference of language is a barrier to communication, as thoughts must be definitely formulated in words in order to be comprehensible to another entity on that plane. On the mental plane, however, men communicate directly by thought-transference, whatever their language may be.

Space is no barrier, for a man can come into touch with any other man merely by directing his attention to him. The real barrier between men are those due to the difference in their evolution. The less evolved can know only as much of the more evolved as he is able to respond to, and such limitations can obviously be felt, only by the more evolved, as the lesser has all he can contain.

The method of finding a man on the mental plane, whether he be living or dead, is as follows. For each of a man's vehicles there is what may be called a keynote, a sort of average tone of the man's various forces and qualities on the plane concerned. There have never been found two persons whose keynotes were identical at all levels, ie., etheric, astral, mental and causal, so as to make the same chord, when struck simultaneously.

Thus the chord of each man is unique, and whether he be sleeping or waking, living or dead, his chord is always the same, and he can always be found by it.

If the man is in the higher world, in his causal body alone, he still has his chord with him, because his permanent

atoms are quite sufficient to give out the distinctive sound.

The trained seer, who is able to sense the chord, attunes his own vehicles for the moment exactly to its notes, and then by an effort of will sends forth its sound. Wherever in the three worlds the man sought may be, there is an instantaneous response from him. His causal body lights up instantly, like a great flame, and this is at once visible to the seer, so that a magnetic line of communication is established.

The seer can use that line as a kind of telescope, or, if he prefers, he can send his consciousness flashing along it with the speed of light, and see from the other end of it, as it were.

The man's chord is his true occult name. Some vague tradition of this is probably the origin of the belief among certain savages that a man's real name must be concealed, lest magic be worked upon him. Thus also it is said, that at each Initiation the man's true name is changed, since each Initiation is at once the official recognition, and the fulfilment of a progress by which the man, as it were, has raised himself into a higher key, so that thenceforward his chord must be sounded differently.

This name of the man must not be confused with the name of the Augoeides [see below], for that is the chord of the three principles of the ego, produced by the vibrations of the âtmic, buddhic and mental atoms, and the monad behind them.

The chord is not actually either heard or seen; it is received by a complex perception which requires the practically simultaneous activity of the consciousness in the causal body and in all the lower vehicles.

Thus every man pronounces his own true name. Just as he has his own odour materially, by which a bloodhound can track him, so he has his sound spiritually. Those who can hear that sound of his in the inner worlds know where he stands on the ladder of evolution, and what he can and cannot do. Freemasons will recognise the chord as the man's own "knock", his own "report", made by the t... of the inner self, that opens for the man the way into the true Lodge.

The Augoeides, the glorified man, is a name sometimes given to the three higher principles of a man, viz., Âtmâ-Buddhi-Manas, which constitute the ego, in the causal body. This, of course, is not an image of any one of the man's past vehicles, but contains within itself the essence of all that was best in each of them; it is the body which indicates more or less perfectly, as through experience it grows, what the deity means that man shall be.

From that vehicle, on the causal levels, it is possible to see not only what the man's past history has been, but also to a considerable extent the future that lies before him.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE AKASHIC RECORDS

No description of the mental plane would be complete without an account of what are known as the Akashic Records. They constitute the only reliable history of the world, and are often spoken of as the memory of nature, also as the true Karmic Records, or the Book of the Lipika.

The word âkâshic is somewhat of a misnomer, for, though the records are read from the âkâsha, or matter of the mental plane, yet they do not really belong to that plane. A still worse name, which was often used in the earlier literature of the subject, was "records of the astral light", for they lie far beyond the astral plane, only broken glimpses of them being found on the astral plane, as we shall see presently.

The word âkâshic is suitable only because it is on the mental plane that we first come definitely into contact with the records, and find it possible to do reliable work with them.

The student is already familiar with the fact that as a person develops, his causal body, which determines the limit of his aura, increases in size, as well as in luminosity and purity of colour. Pursuing this conception to an enormously higher level, we arrive at the idea that the Solar Logos comprehends within Himself the whole of our solar system. Hence anything that happens within our system is within the consciousness of the Logos. Thus we see that the true record is His memory.

Furthermore, it is equally clear that on whatever plane that memory exists, it cannot but be far above anything that we know. Consequently, whatever records we may find our selves able to read must be only a reflection of the great original, mirrored in the denser media of the lower planes.

We know of these records on the buddhic, mental and astral planes, and we will describe them in the reverse order.

On the astral plane the reflection is exceedingly imperfect; such records as can there be seen are fragmentary in the extreme, and often seriously distorted. The analogy of water, which is so often used as a symbol of the astral world is remarkably apt in this case. A clear reflection in still water is at best only a reflection, representing in two dimensions objects which are three-dimensional, and then showing only their shape and colour; also the objects are reversed.

If the surface of the water be ruffled, the reflection is so broken and distorted as to be almost useless, and even misleading as a guide to the real shape and appearance of the objects reflected.

Now on the astral plane we can never have anything approaching what corresponds to a still surface; on the contrary, we have to deal with one in rapid and bewildering motion. Hence we cannot depend upon getting a clear and definite reflection. Thus a clairvoyant who possesses the faculty only of astral sight can never rely upon any picture of the past that comes before him as being accurate and perfect. Here and there some part of it *may* be so, but he has no means of knowing which it is. By long and careful training he may learn to distinguish between reliable and unreliable impressions, and to construct from broken reflections some kind of image of the object reflected. But usually long before he has mastered these difficulties he will have developed mental sight, which renders such labours unnecessary.

On the mental plane, conditions are very different. There, the record is full and accurate; also it is impossible to make any mistake in reading. That is to say, any number of clairvoyants, using mental sight, and examining a certain record, would see precisely the same reflection, and each would acquire a correct impression from reading it.

With the faculties of the causal body the task of reading the records is still easier. It appears, in fact, that for perfection in reading-- [so far as that is possible on the mental plane]—the ego must be fully awakened, so that he can use the atomic matter of the mental plane.

It is well known that if a number of persons witness a given event on the physical plane, their accounts afterwards will often vary considerably. This is because of faulty observation, each frequently seeing only those features of the event which most appealed to him.

This personal equation would not appreciably affect the impressions received in the case of an observation on the mental plane. For each observer would thoroughly grasp the entire subject, and so it would be impossible for him to see its parts out of due proportion.

Error, however, may be easily occur in transferring the impressions received to the lower planes. The reasons for this we may group roughly as those due to the observer himself, and those due to the inherent difficulty, or rather impossibility, of performing the task perfectly.

In the nature of things, only a small fraction of the experience on the mental plane could be expressed in physical worlds at all; hence, since all expression must be partial, there is obviously some possibility of choice in selecting

the part expressed. For this reason, clairvoyant investigations by leading Theosophists are constantly checked and verified by more than one investigator, before they are published.

Apart from the personal equation, however, there are still the difficulties inherent in bringing impressions down from a higher to a lower plane. In order to understand this, the analogy of the art of painting is useful. A painter has to endeavour to reproduce a three-dimensional object on a flat surface, which of course has only two dimensions. Even the most perfect picture is in reality almost infinitely far from being a reproduction of the scene it represents: for hardly a single line or angle in it can ever be the same as those in the object copied. It is simply a highly ingenious attempt to make upon *one* sense only, by means of lines and colours on a flat source, an impression similar to that which the actual scene depicted would make upon us. It can convey to us nothing, except by suggestion dependent on our own previous experience, of, for example, the roar of the sea, the scent of flowers, the taste of fruit, the hardness or softness of surfaces.

Far greater are the difficulties experienced by a clairvoyant in endeavouring to express mental phenomena in physical plane language; for, as was mentioned in an earlier chapter, the mental world is five-dimensional.

The appearance of the records varies to a certain extent, according to the conditions under which they are seen. Upon the astral plane, the reflection is usually a simple picture, though occasionally the figure seen would be endowed with motion. In this case, instead of a mere snapshot, a rather longer and more perfect reflection has taken place.

On the mental plane, they have two widely different aspects. *First*: if the observer is not thinking specially of them, the records simply form a background to whatever is going on. Under such conditions they are really merely reflections from the ceaseless activity of a great Consciousness upon a far higher plane, and have very much the appearance of cinematography pictures. The action of the reflected figures constantly goes on, as though one were watching the actors on a distant stage.

Second: if the trained observer turns his attention specially to any one scene, then, this being the plane of unhampered thought, it is instantly brought before him. Thus, if he wished to see the landing in Britain of Julius Caesar, in a moment he finds himself, not looking at a picture, but actually standing on the shore among the legionaries, with the whole scene being enacted around him, precisely as he would have seen it had he been there when it occurred in 55 BC. The actors are of course entirely unconscious of him, as they are but reflections, nor can any effort of his change the course of their action in any way.

But he has the power of controlling the rate at which the drama shall pass before him. He could thus have the events of a year take place before him in one hour. He could also stop the movement at any moment and hold any particular scene in view as long as he chooses.

Not only does he see all that he would have seen physically, had he been present when the events occurred, but he hears and understands what the people say, and he is conscious of their thoughts and motives.

There is one special case where an investigator can enter into an even closer sympathy with the records. If he is observing a scene in which he himself took part in a previous life, there are two possibilities open to him. [1] He may regard it in the usual manner, just as a spectator, though [as indicated above] a spectator whose insight and sympathy are perfect; or [2] he may once more identify himself with that long-dead personality of his and experience over again the thought and emotions of that time. He recovers, in fact, from the universal consciousness, that portion with which he has himself been associated.

The student will readily perceive the wonderful possibilities that open up before the man who is in full possession of the power to read the âkâshic records at will. He can review at leisure all history, correcting the many errors and misconceptions which have crept into the accounts handed down by historians. He can also watch, for example, the geological changes that have taken place, and the cataclysms which have altered the face of the earth many times.

It is usually possible to determine the date of any record which may be examined, but it may require considerable pains and ingenuity. There are many ways of doing this: [1] The observer may look into the mind of an intelligent person present in the picture, and see what date he supposes it to be; [2] he may observe the date, written in a letter or document. As soon as he has secured the date say according to the Roman or Grecian system of chronology, it is of course merely a matter of calculation to reduce it to the present accepted system. [3] He may turn to some contemporary record, the date of which can easily be ascertained from ordinary historical sources.

In comparatively recent times there is usually no great difficulty in ascertaining the date. But in much older times other methods have to be adopted. Even if the date can be read in the mind of someone living in the picture there may be difficulty in relating his system of dates to that of the observer. In such cases: [4] the observer may run the records before him [which he can do at any speed, such as a year or a second, or faster if he chooses] and count the years from a date that is known. In such cases it is of course necessary to form some approximate idea, from the general appearance and surroundings, of the period, in order that he may not have too long a series of years to count. [5] Where the years run into thousands, the above method would be too tedious to be practical. The observer, as an alternative, can notice the point in the heavens to which the axis of the earth is pointing, and calculate the date from the known data concerning that secondary rotation of the earth, known as the precession of the equinoxes. [6] In extremely early records of events which took place millions of years ago, the period of the precession of the equinoxes [approximately 26,000 years] can be used as a unit. In these instances absolute accuracy is not required, hence the date in round numbers is sufficient for all practical purposes in dealing with such remote epochs.

The accurate numbering of the records is possible only after careful training. As we have seen, mental sight is necessary before any reliable reading can be done. In fact, to minimise the possibility of error, mental sight ought to be fully at the command of the investigator while awake in the physical body; and to obtain this years of labour and rigid self-discipline are necessary.

Moreover, as the true records lie on a plane at present far beyond our ken, to comprehend them *perfectly* demands faculties of a far higher order than any which humanity has yet evolved. Hence our present view of the whole subject must necessarily be imperfect, because we are looking at it from below instead of from above.

The âkâshic records must not be confused with mere man-made thought-forms, which exist in such abundance on both the mental and astral planes.

Thus for example, as we saw in Chapter VIII, any great historical event, having been constantly thought of, and vividly imaged by large numbers of people, exists as a definite thought-form on the mental plane. The same applies to characters in drama, fiction, etc. Such products of thought [often be it noted, of quite ignorant or inaccurate thought] are much easier to see than the true âkâshic record, for, as we have said, to read the records requires training, whilst to see thought-forms needs nothing but a glimpse of the mental plane.

Hence many visions of saints, seer, etc., are not of the true records but merely of thought-forms.

One method of reading the records is by means of psychometry. It appears that there is a sort of magnetic attachment or affinity between any particle of matter and the record which contains history. Every particle, in fact, bears within it forever the impress of everything that has occurred in its neighbourhood. This affinity enables it to act as a kind of conductor between the record and the faculties of anyone who can read it.

The untrained clairvoyant usually cannot read the records without some such physical link to put him *en rapport* with the subject required. Such a method of exercising clairvoyance is psychometry.

Thus, if a fragment of stone belonging, say, to Stonehenge, is given to a psychometer, he will see, and be able to describe, the ruins and the country surrounding them; in addition, he will probably also be able to see some of the past events with which Stonehenge was associated, such as Druidical ceremonies, for example.

It is quite probable that ordinary memory is but another expression of the same principle. The scenes through

which we pass in the course of our lives seem to act upon the cells of the brain in such a way as to establish a connection between those cells and the portion of the records with which we have been associated, and so we "remember" what we have seen.

Even a trained clairvoyant needs a link to enable him to find the record of an event of which he has no previous knowledge. There are several way in which this may be done. Thus : [1] if he has visited the scene of the event, he may call up the image of the spot, and then run through the records until he reaches the period desired. [2] If he has not seen the place in question, he may run back in time to the date of the event and then search for what he wants; [3] he may examine the records of the period, when he will have no difficulty in identifying any prominent person connected with the event; then he can run through the records of that person till he comes to the event for which he was looking.

We thus see that the power to read the memory of nature exists in men in many degrees; there are the few trained clairvoyants who can consult the records for themselves at will; the psychometer who needs an object connected with the past in order to bring him into touch with the past; the person who gets occasional, spasmodic glimpses of the past; the crystal-gazer who can sometimes direct his less certain astral telescope [see *The Astral Body*, p. 235] to some scene of long ago.

Many of the lower manifestations of these powers are exercised unconsciously. Thus many a crystal-gazer watches scenes from the past, without being able to distinguish them from visions of the present; other vaguely psychic persons find pictures constantly arising before their eyes, without ever realising that they are actually psychometrising the various objects which happen to be around them.

A variant of this class of psychic is the man who is able to psychometrise persons only, instead of inanimate objects, as is more usual. In most cases this faculty shows itself erratically. Such psychics will sometimes, when they meet a stranger, see in a flash some prominent event in that stranger's life; on other occasions they will receive no special impression.

More rarely are found persons who get detailed visions of the past life of everyone they encounter. One of the best examples of this class is probably that of the German Zschokke, who describes his remarkable faculty circumstantially in his autobiography.

Although it is outside the scope of this book to treat of the buddhic plane, yet for the sake of completeness, and in this once instance, it may be well briefly to refer to the records as they exist on the buddhic plane.

The records, referred to as the memory of nature, are on the plane of buddhi very much more than a memory in the ordinary sense of the word. On this plane time and space are no longer limitations. The observer no longer needs to pass a series of events in review, for past and present, as well as future, are all alike and simultaneously present to him, for he is in what is called the "Eternal Now" –meaningless as such a phrase may sound on the physical plane.

Infinitely below the consciousness of the Logos as even the buddhic plane is, it is abundantly clear that the "record: is not merely a memory; for all that has happened in the past, or that will happen in the future, is *happening now* before His eyes, just as much as are the events of what we call the present. Incredible as this may sound, it is nevertheless true.

A simple and purely physical analogy may help to a partial understanding, not indeed of the future, but of the past and present being visible simultaneously.

Let the following two premises only be granted:

[1] That physical light can travel, at its usual speed, indefinitely into space without loss.

[2] That the Logos, being omnipresent, must be at every point in space, not successively, but simultaneously.

Granting these premises, it necessarily follows that everything which has ever happened, from the very beginning

of the world, must at this very moment be taking place before the eyes of the Logos –not a mere memory of it, but the actual occurrence itself being now under His observation.

Further, by a simple movement of consciousness through space, He would not only be *continuously* conscious of every event that had ever happened, but would also be conscious of every event happening, at any speed He chooses, either *forwards* [as we reckon time], or *backwards*.

The illustration, however as stated, does not appear to throw any light on the problem of seeing the future, which for the present must remained unexplained, based, apart from metaphysical considerations, solely on the statements of those who have themselves been able to exercise, in some degree, the faculty of seeing future events.

The future cannot be seen as clearly as the past, for the faculty to see the future belongs to a still higher plane. Moreover, although prevision is to a great extent possible on the mental plane, yet it is not perfect, because wherever in the web of destiny the hand of the developed man comes in, his powerful will may introduce new threads, and change the pattern of the life to come. The course of the ordinary undeveloped man, who has practically no will of his own worth speaking of, may often be foreseen enough, but when the ego boldly takes his future into his own hands, exact prevision becomes impossible.

A man who can use his atmic body can contact the Universal Memory beyond the limits even of his own Chain.

On p.88 we mentioned one possible cause of plagiarism. Another cause, which sometimes occurs, is that two writers happening to see the same âkâshic record at the same time. In this case, they not only apparently plagiarise each other, but also, though each thinks himself the creator of a plot, a situation, etc., both are actually plagiarising the world's true history.

CHAPTER XXIX

MENTAL PLANE INHABITANTS

In classifying the inhabitants of the mental plane, we will adopt the classification chosen for the inhabitants of the astral plane [see *The Astral Body*, p. 168] viz. :

[1] Human, [2] Non-Human, [3] Artificial.

Since the products of man's evil passions, which bulk so largely the astral world, cannot exist on the mental plane, the sub-divisions we shall have to consider will naturally be far fewer than in the case of astral entities.

The following table sets out the main classes: -

LOWER MENTAL PLANE INHABITANTS			
Human		Non-Human	Artificial
Embodied	Disembodied		
Adepts	Human beings in devachan	Rûpadevas	Elementals
Initiates		Animal Group-Souls	
Highly developed men		Individualised Animals	
		Second Elemental Kingdom	

It will be seen that Human entities are divided, for convenience, into *embodied*, *i.e.*, those who are still attached to a physical body, "alive" as we say, and those who are "dead", who have no physical body.

HUMAN : EMBODIED –Human beings who, while still attached to a physical body, are able to move in full consciousness and activity on the mental plane, are either Adepts or Their initiated pupils, for until a student has been taught by his Master how to use his mental body he will be unable to move with freedom upon even its lower levels.

Adepts and Initiates appear as splendid globes of living colour, driving away all evil influence wherever they go, shedding around them a feeling of restfulness and happiness, of which even those who do not see them are often conscious. It is in the mental world that much of their most important work is done, more especially upon the higher levels, where the individuality or ego can be acted upon directly. It is from this plane that they shower the grandest spiritual influences upon the world of thought. From it also they impel great and beneficent movements of all kinds. Here also much of the spiritual force poured out by the self-sacrifice of the Nirmanakayas [see *The Astral Body*, p. 57] is distributed; here also direct teaching is given to those pupils who are sufficiently advanced to receive it in this way, since it can be imparted far more readily and completely here than on the astral plane. In addition, they have a great field of work in connection with those whom we call the "dead".

Adepts or Masters for the most part reside on the highest or atomic level of the mental plane.

But in the majority of cases, those who attain to the Asekha level, no longer retain either physical, astral, mental or causal bodies, but live permanently at Their highest level. When They need to deal with a lower plane, They draw round Themselves a temporary vehicle of the matter belonging to that plane.

In order the better to understand the conditions of the mental plane and its inhabitants, it is necessary to mention also those who are not present on the plane. The characteristics of the mental world being unselfishness and spirituality, it follows that the black magician and his pupils can find no place there. In spite of the fact that in many of them the intellect is very highly developed, and consequently the matter of their mental bodies is extremely active and sensitive along certain lines, yet in every case those lines are connected with personal desire of some sort. They can find expression only through that lower part of the mental body, which is inextricably entangled with astral matter. As a necessary consequence of this limitation, their activities are practically confined to the astral and physical planes.

A man whose whole life is evil and selfish, may indeed have periods of purely abstract thought during which he may utilise his mental body, provided he has learnt how to do so. But the moment that the personal element comes in, and the effort is made to produce some evil result, the thought is no longer abstract, and the man finds himself working in connection with the familiar astral matter once more. One might therefore say that a black magician could function on the mental plane only while he forgot that he was a black magician.

But even while he forgot it, he could be visible on the mental plane only to men functioning there consciously, never by any possibility to people in devachan, who are entirely secluded in a world of their own thoughts, into which nothing of an unpleasant or evil character can intrude from without.

For ordinary people during sleep, or for psychically developed persons in trance, to penetrate to the mental plane, is just possible, though extremely rare. Purity of life and purpose would be an absolutely pre-requisite, and even when the plane was reached there would be nothing that could be called real consciousness, but simply a capacity for receiving certain impressions. An example of this was given in the chapter on *Sleep-Life*, p. 166.

HUMAN: DISEMBODIED –This class comprises all those in devachan, who have already been described in the chapters dealing with that condition.

NON-HUMAN : -It was mentioned in *The Astral Body*, p. 169, that there are occasionally found on the astral plane

certain cosmic entities, visitors from other planets and systems. Such visitors are very much more frequent on the mental plane. The difficulties of describing such entities in human language are almost insuperable, and the task will therefore not be attempted.

They are very lofty beings and are concerned, not with individuals, but with great cosmic processes. Those in touch with our world are the immediate agents for the carrying out of the law of karma, especially in connection with changes of land and sea brought about by earthquakes, tidal waves, and all other seismic causes.

Rûpadevas :-The beings known to the Hindus and Buddhists as Devas, to Zoroastrians as the Lords of the heavenly and the earthly, to the Christians and Mohammedans as angels, and elsewhere as Sons of God, etc., are a kingdom of spirits belonging to an evolution distinct from that of humanity, an evolution in which they may be regarded as a kingdom next above humanity, much as humanity is next above the animal kingdom. There is here however, an important difference; for, whilst an animal can pass only into the human kingdom, a human being, when he attains the Asekha level, has several choices, of which the deva line is one.

Although connected with the earth, devas are by no means confined to it, for the whole of our chain of seven worlds is as one world to them, their evolution being through a grand system of seven chains. Their hosts have hitherto been recruited chiefly from other humanities in the solar system, some lower and some higher than ours, since but a very small portion of our own is sufficiently advanced to be able to join them. It seems certain that some of their very numerous classes have not passed through any humanity at all comparable with ours.

It is at present not possible for us to understand very much about them, but it is clear that the aim of their evolution is considerably higher than ours; that is to say, while the level of the Asekha Adept is that at which we are aiming at the end of the seventh round, the level attained by the deva evolution in the corresponding period will be a very much higher one. For them, as for us, there is a steeper, but shorter path leading to still more sublime heights.

There are at least as many types of angels or devas as there are races of men, and in each type there are many grades of power, of intellect, and of general development, so that altogether there are hundreds of varieties.

Angels have been divided into nine Orders, the names used in the Christian Church being Angels, Archangels, Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers, Cherubim and Seraphim. Of these, seven belong to the great Rays of which the solar system is composed, and two may be called cosmic, as they are common to some other systems.

In each Order there are many types; in each there are some who work; some who assist those in trouble and sorrow; others who work among the vast hosts of the dead; some who guard, some who meditate, while others are at the stage where they are mainly concerned with their own development.

There are also angels of music, who express themselves in music as we express ourselves in words; to them an arpeggio is a greeting, a fugue a conversation, an oratorio an oration. There are angels of colour, who express themselves by kaleidoscopic changes of glowing hues. There are also angels who live in and express themselves by perfumes and fragrances. A sub-division of this type includes the angels of incense, who are drawn by its vibrations and find pleasure in utilising its possibilities.

There is still another kind, belonging to the kingdom of nature-spirits or elves, who do not *express* themselves by means of perfumes, but who live by and on such emanations and so are always found where fragrance is disseminated. There are many varieties, some feeding upon coarse and loathsome odours, and others only upon those which are delicate and refined. Amongst these are a few types who are especially attracted by the smell of incense, and who are therefore to be found in churches where incense is used.

Those who have been taught to know and respond to the ancient call at the preface of the Christian Eucharist and who are charged with the distribution of the force, are often called the apostolic or messenger angels. Some of these are thoroughly conversant with this class of work, from long practice, others are novices, eagerly learning

what has to be done, and how to do it.

The method of angelic evolution being largely by service, a ceremony such as the Eucharist offers them a remarkably good opportunity, of which they readily avail themselves. At a Low celebration, the Directing Angel first responds to the call sent out by the priest, and he seems to assemble the rest; at a High Celebration or *Missa Cantata*, the ancient melody attracts the notice of all immediately that it rings out, and they stand ready to attend at the appropriate time for each.

The service rendered by the angels is of very many kinds, only a few bringing them into contact with human beings, mainly in connection with religious ceremonies.

The angels invoked in the Christian services are far above men in spiritual development. In Freemasonry also angelic aid is invoked, but those called upon are nearer to the level of men in development and intelligence, and each of them brings with him a number of subordinates, who carry out his directions.

Every regularly constituted Masonic Lodge is in charge of a seventh-ray Angel, who directs its affairs.

None of the devas have physical bodies such as we have. The lowest kind are called Kâmadevas, who have as their lowest body the astral; the next class is that of the Rûpadevas, who have bodies of lower mental matter, and who have their habitat on the four lower, or rûpa levels of the mental plane; the third class is that of the arûpadevas, who live in bodies of higher mental or causal matter. Above these there are four other great classes, inhabiting respectively the four higher planes of our solar system. Above and beyond the deva kingdom altogether stand the great hosts of planetary spirits. In this book we are concerned, of course principally with the Rûpadevas.

The relationship of devas to nature –spirits somewhat resembles, at a higher level, that of men to animals. Just as an animal can attain individualisation only by association with man, so it seems that a nature-spirit can normally acquire a permanent reincarnating individuality only by an attachment of a somewhat similar character to devas.

Devas will never be human, most of them already beyond that stage, but there are some who have been human beings in the past.

The bodies of devas are more fluidic than those of men, being capable of far greater expansion and contraction. They have also a certain fiery quality which clearly distinguishes them from human beings. The fluctuations in the aura of a deva are so great that, for example, the aura of one which was normally about 150 yards in diameter has been observed to expand to about two miles in diameter.

The colours in the aura of a deva are more of the nature of flame than of cloud. A man looks like an exceedingly brilliant, yet delicate cloud of glowing gas, but a deva looks like a mass of fire.

Devas live far more in the circumference, more all over their auras than a man does. Whilst 99 percent of the matter of a man's aura is within the periphery of his physical body, the proportion is far less in the case of a deva.

They usually appear as human beings of gigantic size. They possess vast knowledge, great power, and are most splendid in appearance; they are described as radiant, flashing creatures, myriad-hued, like rainbows of changing supernal colours, of stateliest imperial mien, calm energy incarnate, embodiments of resistless strength. In *Revelation* [x. 1] one of them is described as having "a rainbow upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire". "As the sound of many waters" are their voices. They guide natural order, their cohorts carrying on ceaselessly the process of nature with regularity and accuracy.

Devas produce thought-forms as we do, but theirs are usually not so concrete as ours, until they reach a high level. They have a wide generalising nature, and are constantly making gorgeous plans. They have a colour language, which is probably not as definite as our speech, though in certain ways it may express more.

The Initiations which we take are not taken by devas; their kingdom and ours converge at a point higher than the Adept.

There are ways in which a man can enter the deva evolution, even at our stage, or lower.

The acceptance of this line of evolution is sometimes spoken of, in comparison with the sublime renunciation of the Nirmanakayas, as "yielding to the temptation to become a god". But it must not be inferred from this expression that any shadow of blame attaches to the man who makes this choice. The Path which he selects is not the shortest, but it is a very noble one, and if his developed intuition impels him toward it, it is certainly the one best suited to his capacities.

In Freemasonry the deva captain associated with the S.D. is a rūpadeva, and he employs nature-spirits and elemental essence at his own level. The deva captains corresponding to the three Principal Officers are arūpadevas, who possess the consciousness and wield the forces of the planes which they respectively represent.

The deva of the J.W. takes charge of the 1st degree, the deva of the S.W. of the 2nd degree, and the deva of W. M. of the 3rd degree.

Nothing is known of any rule or limit for the work of the devas. They have more lines of activity than we can imagine. They are usually quite willing to expound and exemplify subjects along their own line to any human being who is sufficiently developed to appreciate them. Much instruction is given in this way, but few are able to profit by it as yet.

Whilst devas are exceedingly beautiful, the lower orders of them have the vaguest and cloudiest conceptions of things, being inaccurate so far as facts are concerned. Hence, while a deva friend may be an exceedingly interesting person, yet, having no relation to the facts amidst which humanity is evolving, the greatest care should be exercised in following advice he may give as to physical actions.

In general, the higher order of devas unreservedly co-operate with the great Plan of the universe; hence the perfect "order" that we find in nature. In the lower ranks, this perfect obedience is instinctive and automatic, rather than conscious; they do their work, feeling impelled in the direction of the One Will which runs through everything.

In the case of National devas, whilst the one at the head of each nation is a being of lofty intelligence, who always co-operates with the Plan, the lower national devas are found fighting, for example, for their own nation on a battlefield. As their intelligence develops, they co-operate more and more with the Plan.

The Spirit of the Earth, that obscure being who has the earth for his body, is not of the highest order of devas. Little is known of him; he may be said to belong more to the Rūpa Devas, because he has the earth for his body.

Devas who are beyond the level of the Asekha Adept, *i.e.*, that of the Fifth Initiation, normally live in what is called in Sanskrit the Jñānadeha, or the body of knowledge. The lowest part of that body is an atom of the nirvanic plane, serving them as our physical body serves us.

For a description of the four Devarâjas, or Regents of the Earth, the student is referred to *The Astral Body*, p. 187.

In Freemasonry, the four tassels which appear in the corners of the "Indented Border" symbolise the Devarâjas, the Rulers of the elements of earth, water, air and fire, and the agents of the law of Karma.

Animal Group-Souls. The group-souls, to which the vast majority of animals are attached, are found on the lower mental plane. It would take us too far afield to describe the nature of these group-souls, so we confine ourselves merely to mentioning them here.

Individualised Animals. These, together with their state of consciousness on the mental plane, have already been described on p. 204.

Second Elemental Kingdom. We have already, in Chapter II, described the genesis of the Mental Elemental Essence; we have also dealt with this essence in its function as part of man's mental body, and also as used in

thought-forms. Little more, therefore, need be said about it here.

There are three Elemental Kingdoms: the First ensouls matter of the higher mental or causal sub-planes; the Second, the matter of the four lower levels of the mental plane; the Third, astral matter. In the Second Kingdom, the highest subdivision exists on the fourth sub-plane, whilst there are two classes on each of the three lower sub-planes, thus making in all seven subdivisions on these four sub-planes.

We have already seen [p.5] that the mental essence is on the *downward* arc of evolution, and therefore is *less* evolved than astral essence or, of course, than any of the later kingdoms, such as the mineral; and we have also emphasised the importance of this fact, which the student should bear constantly in mind.

Mental Essence is, if possible, even more instantaneously sensitive to thought-action than is the astral Essence, the wonderful delicacy with which it responds to the faintest action of the mind being constantly and prominently brought to the notice of investigators. It is, of course, in this response that its very life consists, its progress being helped by the use of it by thinking entities.

If it could be imagined as entirely free for a moment from the action of thought, it would appear as a formless conglomeration of dancing infinitesimal atoms, instinct with marvellous intensity of life, but probably making but little progress on the downward path of evolution into matter. But when thought seizes upon it, and stirs it into activity, throwing it on the rūpa levels into all kinds of lovely forms [and on the arūpa levels into flashing streams], it receives a distinct additional impulse which, often repeated, helps it forward on its way.

For when a thought is directed from higher levels to the affairs of earth, it sweeps downwards and takes upon itself the matter of the lower planes. In doing this, it brings the elemental essence, of which the first veil was formed, into contact with that lower matter; thus by degrees the essence becomes accustomed to answer to lower vibrations, and so progresses in its downward evolution into matter.

The Essence is also very noticeably affected by music, poured forth by great musicians in devachan [see p. 197].

It should be clearly recognised that there is a vast difference between the grandeur and power of thought on its own plane and the comparatively feeble effort we know as thought on the physical plane.

Ordinary thought originates in the mental body and, as it descends, clothes itself in astral essence. A man who can use his causal body generates his thoughts at that level; these thoughts clothe themselves in lower mental essence, and are consequently infinitely finer, more penetrating, and in every way more effective.

If the thought be directed exclusively to higher objects, its vibrations may be too fine to find expression in astral matter; but when they do affect this lower matter they have far greater effect than those generated so much nearer to the level of that lower matter.

Following the idea further, the thought of an Initiate takes rise on the buddhic plane, and clothes itself in causal matter; the thought of a Master takes its rise on the plane of âtmâ, wielding the incalculable powers of regions of matter beyond our ordinary ken.

ARTIFICIAL. *Elementals.* Mental elementals, or thought-forms, having already been fully described, little further need be said about them. The mental plane is even more fully peopled by artificial elementals than is the astral plane, and they play a large part among the living creatures that function on the mental plane. They are, of course, more radiant and more brilliantly coloured than are astral elementals, are stronger, more lasting, and more fully vitalised.

When it is also remembered how much grander and more powerful thought is on the mental plane, and that its forces are being wielded not only by human entities, but by devas, and by visitors from higher planes, it will be realised that the importance and influence of such artificial entities can scarcely be exaggerated.

Great use is made of these mental elementals by Masters and Initiates, the elementals which they create having,

of course, a much longer existence and proportionately greater power than any of those which were described in dealing with the astral plane, in *The Astral Body*, p. 190.

CHAPTER XXX

DEATH OF THE MENTAL BODY

Life in devachan, the heaven-world, being, as we have seen, finite, must come to an end. This takes place when the ego has assimilated all the essence of the experiences which were gathered in the preceding physical and astral lives.

All the mental faculties, which were expressed through the mental body, are then withdrawn within the higher mental or causal body. Together with them, the *mental unit*, which performs a function similar to that performed by the physical and astral permanent atoms, also is withdrawn within the causal body, and remains there in a latent condition until called forth into renewed activity, when the time comes for re-birth.

The mental unit, together with the astral and physical permanent atoms, are enwrapped in the buddhic life-web [see p. 285], and stored up as a radiant nucleus-like particle in the causal body, being all that remains to the ego of his bodies in the lower worlds.

The mental body itself, the last of the *temporary* vestures of the true man, the ego, is left behind as a mental corpse, just as the physical and astral bodies were left behind. Its materials disintegrate, and return to the general matter of the mental plane.

We are not, strictly, concerned in this volume with the life of the man on the higher mental or causal plane, but, in order not to leave the story of man's life between one incarnation and the next too incomplete, we may mention very briefly the portion of that life spent on the higher mental plane.

Every human being, on his completion of his life on the astral and lower mental planes, obtains at least a flash of consciousness of the ego, in the causal body.

The more developed, of course, have a definitely conscious period, living as the ego on its own plane.

In the momentary flash of ego-consciousness, the man sees his last life as a whole, and gathers from it the impression of success or failure in the work which it was meant to do.

Together with this, he also has a forecast of the life before him, with the knowledge of the general lesson which that is to teach, or the specific progress which he is intended to make in it. Only very slowly does the ego awaken to the value of these glimpses; but when he comes to understand them, he naturally begins to make use of them. Eventually he arrives at a stage when this glimpse is no longer momentary, when he is able to consider the question much more fully, and to devote some time to his plans for the life which lies before him.

Further description of the life of the ego on his own plane must now be deferred for the fourth volume of this series, which will deal with [*The Causal Body*](#).

CHAPTER XXXI

THE PERSONALITY AND EGO

We now come to consider the relationship between the personality and the ego. As, however, we have not yet studied the ego [this, of course, having to be reserved for our next volume on the Causal Body], it will not be possible for us to investigate the relationship between personality and ego quite fully. Furthermore, we must in this volume examine the question mainly from the point of view of the personality, rather than from that of the ego. In

The Causal Body we must again take up the subject, which is one of very great importance, but then, of course, principally from the point of view of the ego.

The *personality* consists of the transitory vehicles through which the true man, the Thinker, expresses himself in the physical, astral and lower mental worlds; *i.e.*, the physical, astral and lower mental bodies, and of all the activities connected with these vehicles.

The *individuality* consists of the Thinker himself, the Self in the causal body. As a tree puts out leaves, to last through spring, summer and autumn, so does the individuality put out personalities to last through the life-periods spent on the physical, astral and lower mental planes. Just as the leaves take in, assimilate, and pass on nutriment to the sap, which is eventually withdrawn into the parent trunk, and then fall and perish, so does the personality gather experience and pass it on to the parent individuality, eventually, when its task is completed, falling and perishing.

The ego incarnates in a personality for the sake of acquiring definiteness. The ego on his own plane is magnificent, but vague in his magnificence, except in the case of men far advanced on the road of evolution.

The 'principles" of man are sometimes classified as follows:			
One classification		A slightly different classification	
The Immortal Triad or Individuality	Âtmâ	IMMORTAL	Âtmâ
	Buddhi		Buddhi
	Manas		Higher Manas
The Perishable Quarternary or Personality	Kâma	CONDITIONALLY IMMORTAL	Kâma-Manas
	Prâna	MORTAL	Prâna
	Etheric Double		Etheric Double
	Dense Body		Dense Body

A classification used by H.P. Blavatsky is as follows.
She speaks of four divisions of the mind:-

- [1] Manas-taijasi, the resplendent or illuminated manas, which is really buddhi, or at least that state of man when his manas has become merged in buddhi, having no separate wil of its own.
- [2] Manas proper, the higher manas, the abstract thinking mind.
- [3] Antahkarana; the link or bridge between higher manas and kâma-manas during incarnation.
- [4] Kâma-Manas, which on this theory is the personality.

Sometimes she calls manas the deva-ego, or the divine as distinguished from the personal self. Higher manas is divine because it has positive thought, which is kriyashakti, the power of doing things, all work being in reality done

by thought-power. The word divine comes from div to shine, and refers to the divine quality of its own life which shines from within manas.

The lower mind is merely a reflector, having no light of its own; it is something through which the light comes, or through which the sound comes –merely *persona*, a mask.

Among the Vedantins, or in Shri Shankarâchârya's school, the term antakarana [see p. 271] is used to indicate the mind in its fullest sense, meaning the entire internal organ or instrument between the innermost Self and the outer world, and is always described as of four parts:-

- [1] Ahamkâra-----The "I maker"
- [2] Buddhi -----Insight, intuition, or pure reason
- [3] Manas -----Thought
- [4] Chitta -----Discrimination of objects

What the Western man usually calls his mind, with its powers of concrete and abstract thought, is the last two in the above classification, viz., Manas and Chitta.

The Theosophist should recognise in the Vedantic divisions his own familiar âtmâ, buddhi, manas, and the lower mind.

In the symbolism of Freemasonry, the lower mind and the mental body are represented by the S.D.

The following table sets out the principles of man in the system of Freemasonry:-

Principles in man		Officer	Colour of associated nature-spirits and elemental essence
Sanskrit	English		
Âtmâ	Will	W.M.	Rose, gold, blue and green
Buddhi	Intuition	S.W.	Predominantly electric blue
Higher Manas	Higher Mind	J.W.	Predominantly golden
Lower Manas	Lower Mind	S.D.	Yellow
Kâma	Desire and Emotion	J.D.	Crimson
Linga Sharîra	Dense Physical Body	O.G.	

Thus the Higher Triad or Spiritual Trinity, both in God and man, are represented in Freemasonry by the three Principal Officers, while the lower self, personality, or quaternary, is represented by the three Assistant Officers and the Tyler.

In Christianity we find the following symbolism:-

Elements and vessels (in the church Mass)	Principles in Man
Host	Monad
Paten	Âtmâ-Buddhi-Manas

Wine	Ego or Individuality
Chalice	Causal Body
Water	Personality

The taking on of a personality by the ego has also been likened to the projection of a spark from the Flame of Mind. The flame fires the material upon which it has fallen, and from that a new flame will arise, identical in its essence with that which generated it, but separated for purposes of manifestation. Hence it is said that you may light a thousand candles from a single flame, but the flame is never diminished, although a thousand flames are visible where only one was visible before.

The Thinker, the individuality, alone endures; he is the man for whom "the hour never strikes", the eternal youth who, as the *Bhagavad Gitā* expresses it, puts on and casts off bodies as a man puts on new garments and throws off the old. Each personality is a new part for the immortal Actor, and he treads the stage of human life over and over again; but in the life-drama each character he assumes is the child of the preceding ones, and the father of those to come, so that the life-history is a continuous one.

The elements of which the personality is composed are bound together by the links of memory caused by the impressions made on the three lower vehicles, and also by the self-identification of the Thinker with his vehicles, which sets up the personal "I" consciousness known as *Ahamkāra*, derived from *Aham* meaning "I", and *kāra* meaning "making"; Ahamkara thus means the "I-maker".

In the lower stages of evolution, this "I" consciousness is in the physical and astral vehicles, the greatest activity being in these bodies; later it passes to the lower mental body, which then assumes predominance.

The personality, with its transient feelings, desires, passions, thoughts, thus forms a quasi-independent entity; yet all the time it draws its energies from the Thinker it enwraps.

Moreover, as its qualifications, which belong to the lower worlds, are often in direct antagonism to the permanent interests of the individuality, the "Dweller in the body", conflict is set up, victory sometimes inclining to the temporary pleasure, sometimes to the permanent gain.

In dealing with the personality, the obstacle to be overcome is *asmitā*, the notion that "I am this", or what a Master once called "self-personality". The personality, as we have seen, develops through life into quite a definite thing, with decided physical, astral and mental form, occupation and habits. And there is no objection to that, if it be a good specimen. But if the indwelling life can be persuaded that he *is* that personality, he will begin to serve its interests, instead of using it merely as a tool for his spiritual purposes. Hence, in consequence of this error we find men seeking inordinate wealth, power, fame, etc.

"Self-personality" is the greatest obstacle to the use of the personality by the higher self, and so to spiritual progress.

The life of a personality, of course, begins when the Thinker forms a new mental body [see Chapter XXXII] and it endures until that mental body disintegrates at the close of the period spent in devachan.

The objective of the ego is to unfold his latent powers, and this he does by putting himself down into successive personalities. Men who do not understand this –and they are, of course, at the present time the great majority of humanity –look upon the personality as the real self, and consequently live for it alone, regulating their lives for what appears to be its temporary advantage.

The man, however, who understands, realises that *the only important thing is the life of the ego*, and that its progress is the object for which the temporary personality must be used. Thus, when he has to decide between two possible courses of action, he does not, as most men do, consider which will bring him the greater pleasure or profit as a personality, but which will bring greater progress to him as an ego. Experience soon teaches him that nothing which is not good for all can ever be good for him, or for anyone. Thus he learns to forget himself

altogether, and to consider only what is best for humanity as a whole.

Intensification of the personality, at the expense of the ego, is an error against which the student should ever be on his guard. Consider, for example, the probable result of the very commonest of failings –selfishness. This is primarily a *mental* attitude or condition, so that its result must be looked for in the mental realm. As it is an intensification of the personality, at the expense of the individuality, one of its results will undoubtedly be the accentuation of the lower personality, so that the selfishness tends to reproduce itself in aggravated form, and to grow steadily stronger. This, of course, is part of the general workings of karmic law, and emphasises how fatal a bar to progress is persistence in the fault of selfishness. For nature's severest penalty is always deprivation of the opportunity for progress, just as her highest reward is the offering of such opportunity.

When a man rise to a level somewhat higher than that of the ordinary man, and his principal activity becomes mental, there is danger lest he should identify himself with the mind. He should therefore strive to identify himself with the ego, and make the ego the strongest point of his consciousness, thus merging the personality in the individuality.

The student should strive to realise that the mind is *not* the knower, but the instrument that the Knower uses to obtain knowledge. To identify the mind with the Knower is similar to identifying the chisel with the sculptor who wields it. The mind limits the Knower, who, as self-consciousness develops, finds himself hampered by it on every side. As a man may put on thick gloves and find that he thereby loses a great deal in delicacy of touch, so it is with the Knower when he puts on the mind. The hand is within the glove, but its capacities are greatly lessened; so the Knower is present within the mind, but his powers are limited in their expression.

As we saw in a previous chapter, the mental body possesses the characteristic of actually shaping a portion of itself into a likeness of the object presented to it. When it is thus modified, the man is said to *know* the object. What he knows, however, is not the object itself, but the image produced by the object in his own mental body. This image, moreover, for reasons which we have already discussed [see p. 56] is not a perfect reproduction of the object, but is liable to be coloured and distorted by the characteristics of the particular mind in which it is formed.

These considerations bring home to us that, in our minds or mental bodies, we do not know "things in themselves", but only the images of them which are produced in our consciousness. Meditation on these ideas will help the student to realise ever more and more fully that he himself, the true individuality, is *not* the personality which he, as the ego, has temporarily assumed for this one earth-life.

The existence of an evil quality in the personality implies a lack of the corresponding good quality in the ego or individuality. An ego may be imperfect, but he cannot be evil; nor, in any ordinary circumstances, can evil of any kind manifest through the causal body.

The mechanical reason for this has been explained previously. Evil qualities can be expressed only in the four lower subdivisions of astral matter. These reflect their influence in the mental plane only on its four lower subdivisions; hence they cannot affect the ego at all. The only emotions that can appear in the three higher astral sub-planes are good ones, such as love, sympathy and devotion. These affect the ego in the causal body, since he resides on the corresponding sub-planes of the mental world.

The utmost result that is brought about in the causal body by long continued lives of a low type is a certain incapacity to receive the opposite good impression for a very considerable period afterwards, a kind of numbness or paralysis of the causal matter; an unconsciousness which resists impressions of the good of the opposite kind.

The qualities which the ego develops thus cannot be other than good qualities. When they are well-defined, they show themselves in each of his numerous personalities, and consequently those personalities can never be guilty of the vices opposite to such qualities.

But where there is a gap in the ego, there is nothing inherent in the personality to check the growth of the opposite vice; and since others in the world about him already possess that vice, and since man is an imitative animal, it is

quite probable that the vice will speedily manifest in him. The vice, however, as we have seen, belongs to the vehicles of the personality, *not* to the man inside them. In these vehicles its repetition may set up a momentum which is difficult to conquer; but if the ego bestirs himself to create in himself the opposite virtue, then the vice is cut off at its root, and can no longer exist, neither in this life nor in all the lives to come. In other words, the principle to be applied in practical life is, that to rid oneself of an evil quality in such a way that it can never reappear, is to fill the gap in the ego by developing the opposite virtue. Many modern schools of psychology and education now advocate this method rather than that attacking an evil quality in a more direct fashion. "Nerve us with constant affirmatives," said Emerson, with great insight.

The personality is a mere fragment of the ego, the ego projecting but a minute portion of himself into the mental, astral, and physical bodies. This tiny fragment of consciousness can be seen by clairvoyants moving about within man. Sometimes it is seen as "the golden man the size of a thumb," who dwells in the heart. Others see it as a brilliant star of light .

A man may keep this Star of Consciousness where he will, *i.e.*, in any one of the seven Chakrams of the body. Which of these chakrams is most natural depends largely upon the type or "ray" of the man, and also, it seems, upon his race and sub-race. Thus men of the fifth sub-race of the Fifth Root-Race nearly always keep that consciousness in the brain, in the chakram dependent upon the pituitary body. There are however, men of other races who keep it habitually in the heart, the throat, or the solar plexus.

The Star of Consciousness is the representative of the ego in the lower planes, is in fact, what we know as the personality. But although, as we have seen, that personality is part of the ego, its only life and power being that of the ego, it nevertheless often forgets those facts and comes to regard itself as an entirely separate entity, and works for its own ends. In the case of ordinary people who have never studied these matters, the personality is to all intents and purposes the man, the ego manifesting himself only very rarely and partially.

There is always a line of communication between the personality and the ego; this is called *antahkarana*. Most people make no effort to use this line. In its earlier stages evolution consists in the opening up of this line of communication, so that the ego may be able increasingly to assert himself through it and finally to dominate the personality. When this is achieved, the personality has no separate thought or will, but becomes [as it should be] merely an expression of the ego on the lower planes.

The hold that the ego has over his lower vehicles is only very partial, and the antahkarana may be regarded as the arm stretched out between the little piece of the ego that is awakened, and the hand that is put down. When the two are perfectly joined, this attenuated thread ceases to exist.

In Sanskrit, antahkarana means the inner organ or instrument, and its destruction would imply that the ego would no longer need an instrument, but would work directly on the personality. Thus the antahkarana, being the link between the higher and lower self, disappears when one will operates the two.

It must however, be understood that the ego, belonging as he does to an altogether higher plane, can never *fully* express himself in the lower planes. The most that can be expected is that the personality will contain nothing which is not intended by the ego, that it will express as much of him as can be expressed in the lower world.

A man completely untrained has practically no communication with the ego; the Initiate has full communication. [NOTE –It would appear here that, as every other "step" on the occult path, Initiation confers the *possibility* of full communication with the ego rather than its complete realisation; the Initiate must by his own efforts convert the possibility into an actuality. –A. E. Powell] Between these two extremes there are, of course, men at all stages.

It must be born in mind that the ego himself is in process of development, and we therefore have to deal with egos in very different stages of advancement. In any case an ego is in many ways something enormously bigger than a personality can ever be.

Although the ego himself is but a fragment of the Monad, he is yet complete as an ego in his causal body even

when his powers are undeveloped; whereas in the personality there is but a touch of the life of the ego.

It is obviously of great importance that the earnest student should do all in his power to make and keep active the connection between his personality and his ego. In order to do this he must *pay attention* to life, for the paying attention is the descent of the ego in order to look through his vehicles. Many men have fine mental bodies and good brains, but they make little use of them, because they do not pay attention to life. Thus the ego puts but little of himself down into the lower planes, and so the vehicles are left to run riot at their own will.

The cure for this, very briefly, is as follows: The ego should be given the conditions he desires; if this is done, he will promptly put himself down more fully and avail himself of the conditions offered. Thus, if he desires to develop affection, the personality must provide the opportunity for developing affection to the fullest extent on the lower planes. If he desires wisdom, then the personality must by study endeavour to make itself wise on the physical plane.

Pains should be taken to find out what the ego desires; then, if the necessary conditions are provided, he will appreciate the effort and be delighted to respond. The personality will have no cause to complain of the response which the ego will make. In other words, if the personality pays attention to the ego, the ego will pay attention to the personality.

The ego puts down a personality much as a fisherman makes a cast. He does not expect that every cast will be successful, and he is not deeply troubled if one proves a failure. To look after a personality is only one of his activities, so he may very well console himself with successes in other lines of activity. In any case, failure represents the loss of a day, and he can hope to do better with another day.

Often the personality would like more attention from the ego, and he may be sure he will receive it as soon as he deserves it, as soon as the ego finds it worth while.

In the Christian Church, the sacrament of Confirmation is intended to widen and strengthen the link between the ego and the personality. After the preliminary widening of this channel, the divine power rushes through the ego of the bishop into the higher manas of the candidate. At the signing of the cross, it pushes upwards into the buddhic principle, and from there into the âtmâ or spirit. The effect upon âtmâ is reflected in the etheric double, that upon the buddhi is reproduced in the astral body, and what is done to the higher manas should be similarly mirrored in the lower mind. This result is not merely temporary, for the opening up of the connections made a wider channel through which a constant flow can be kept going. The general effect, as said, is to make it easier for the ego to act on and through his vehicles.

The various vehicles of man, looked at from below, give the impression of being one above the other, although they are not, of course, really separated in space, and also of being joined by innumerable fine wires or lines of fire. Every action which works against evolution puts an unequal strain upon these, twisting and entangling them. When a man goes badly wrong in any way, the confusion between the higher and lower bodies is seriously impeded; he is no longer his real self, and only the lower side of his character is able to manifest itself fully.

The Christian Church provides a method of assisting man more rapidly to regain uniformity. For one of the powers specially conferred upon a priest at ordination is that of straightening out this triangle in higher matter; this is the truth behind "absolution", the co-operation of the man having been first obtained by "confession".

A break in the connection between the ego and his vehicles results in insanity. If we imagine each physical particle in the brain is to be joined to its corresponding astral particle by a small tube, each astral particle being similarly joined to its corresponding mental particle, and each mental particle to its corresponding causal particle, then so long as all these tubes are in perfect alignment there will be a clear communication between the ego and his brain. But if any of the sets of tubes be bent, closed, or knocked partially aside, it is obvious that the communication might be wholly or partially interrupted.

From the occult standpoint, the insane may be divided into four main classes, as follows:-

[1] Those who are insane from a defect in the physical brain. The brain may be too small, injured by some accident, pressed upon by a growth, or have its tissues softened.

[2] Those whose defect is in the etheric brain, so that the etheric particles do not correspond with the denser physical particles.

[3] Those in whom the astral body is defective, the tubes being out of alignment with either the etheric or mental particles.

[4] Those in whom the mental body is out of order.

Classes [1] and [2] are quite sane when out of the body in sleep, and of course after death.

Class [3] do not recover sanity until the heaven-world is reached.

Class [4] do not become sane until the causal body is reached, so that for this class the incarnation is a failure.

More than 90 percent of the insane belong to classes [1] and [2].

Obsession is caused by the ousting of the ego by some other entity. Only an ego who had a weak hold on his vehicles would permit obsession.

Although the hold of the ego upon his vehicles is less strong in childhood, yet adults are more likely to be obsessed than children, because the adult is far more likely to have in him qualities which attract undesirable entities and make obsession easy.

Briefly, the best way to prevent obsession is by the use of the will. If the lawful possessor of the body will confidently assert himself and use his will-power, no obsession can take place.

When obsession occurs, it is almost always because the victim has in the first place voluntarily yielded himself to the invading influence, and his first step, therefore, is to reverse the act of submission and determine strongly to resume control over his own property.

The relationship between the personality and the ego is so important that we may perhaps be pardoned for a little repetition, or recapitulation. A study of the inner vehicles of man should at least help us to understand that *it is the higher presentation which is the real man*, not the aggregation of physical matter in the midst of it, to which men are apt to attach such undue importance. The divine trinity within we may not yet see; but we can at least attain some idea of the causal body, which is perhaps the nearest to a conception of the true man as sight at the higher mental level can give us.

Looking at the man from the lower mental level, we can see *only so much of him* as can be expressed in his mental body; on the astral level we find that an additional veil has descended, whilst on the physical plane there is yet another barrier, so that the true man is more effectively hidden than ever.

Such knowledge should lead us to form a somewhat higher opinion of our fellows, since we realise that they are so much more than they seem to the physical eye. In the background, there is always the higher possibility, and often an appeal to the better nature will arouse it from latency and bring it down into manifestation where we can see it.

Having thus studied man as he is, it becomes easier for us to pierce through the dense physical veil and image the reality which is behind. That which is behind all men is the divine nature; hence, grasping this principle, we should be able so to modify and readjust our attitude that we are able to help other men better than we could do without this knowledge.

We have already seen, in the chapter on Contemplation, that the consciousness of the ego may be reached by

maintaining the mind in an attitude of attention, without the attention being directed to anything, the lower mind being stilled in order that consciousness of the higher mind may be experienced. By this means, ideas from the ego flash down into the lower mind with dazzling light, these being the inspirations of genius. "Behold in every manifestation of genius, when combined with virtue, the undeniable presence of the celestial exile, the divine Ego whose jailor thou art, O man of matter".

Genius is thus the momentary grasping of the brain by the larger consciousness of the ego, who is the real man; it is the putting down of the larger consciousness into an organism capable of vibrating in answer to its thrills. Flashes of genius are the voice of the living Spirit in man; they are the voice of the inner God, speaking in the body of man.

The phenomena included in the term "conscience" appear to be of two distinct kinds. Conscience is sometimes used to describe the voice of the ego, and at other times it is spoken of as the will in the domain of morality. Where it is the voice of the ego it should be recognised that it is not always infallible, but may often decide wrongly. For the ego cannot speak with certainty on problems with which it is unfamiliar, being dependent upon experience before he can judge correctly.

That form of conscience, however, which comes from the will does not tell us *what* to do, but rather commands us to follow that which we already know to be best, usually when the mind is trying to invent some excuse to do otherwise. It speaks with the authority of the spiritual will, determining our path in life.

But the will, which is undoubtedly a quality of the ego, must not be confused with the *desires* of the personality in the lower vehicles. Desire is the outgoing energy of the Thinker, determined in direction by the attraction of external objects; will is the outgoing energy of the thinker, determined in direction by conclusions drawn by reason from past experiences, or by the direct intuition of the Thinker himself. In other words: desire is guided from without; will from within.

In the early stages of evolution desire has complete sovereignty, and hurries a man hither and thither; the man is ruled by his astral body; in the middle stages of evolution there is continual conflict between desire and will; the man struggles with kâma-manas; in the later stages of evolution desire dies, and will rules unopposed; the ego is in command.

Summarising, we may say that the voice of the ego or higher self speaking [1] from âtmâ, is true conscience; [2] from buddhi, is intuitive knowledge between right and wrong; [3] from higher manas, is inspiration; when inspiration becomes continuous enough to be normal, it is genius.

As was briefly mentioned in Chapter VI, genius which is of the ego, *sees* instead of arguing; true intuition is one of its faculties, as reason is the method of the lower mind. Intuition is simply insight; it may be described as the exercise of the eyes of the intelligence, the unerring recognition of a truth presented on the mental plane. It sees with certainty; but no reasoned proof of its certitude can be had, because it is beyond and above reason. But before the voice of the ego, speaking through intuition, can be recognised with certainty, careful and prolonged self-training are necessary.

It would appear, however, that the word intuition is used with significations that vary somewhat. Thus it has also been said that the attainment of reliable intuition in daily life means the opening of a direct channel between the buddhic and the astral bodies.

Incidentally, it may be mentioned that it works rather through the heart-centre or chakram, than through the mind. The consecration of a bishop has special reference to this centre and to the stimulation of the intuition. We thus distinguish two distinct modes for the transmission of "intuition" from the higher to the lower consciousness. The one comes from the higher to the lower mental plane, the other direct from the buddhi to the astral body.

The intuition of the causal body has been described as the intuition which recognises the outer; that which comes

from buddhi is intuition which recognises the inner. With buddhic intuition, one sees things from *inside*; with intellectual intuition, one recognises something outside oneself.

Which of these lines is the easier depends upon the method of individualisation. Those who individualised through deep understanding will receive their intuition as a conviction, requiring no reasoning to establish its truth at present, though it must have been understood in previous lives or out of the body in the lower mental plane.

Those who attained individualisation through a rush of devotion, will receive their intuition from the buddhic plane to the astral body.

In both cases, of course, the condition of receptivity to intuition is a steadiness of the lower vehicles.

We need not shrink from the fact that there is frequently a psychological instability associated with genius, as expressed in the saying that madness is akin to genius, and in the statement of Lombroso and others that many of the saints were neuropaths.

Very often the saint and the visionary may have overstrained their brains, so that the physical mechanism is distorted and rendered unstable.

Furthermore, it is sometimes true that the instability is the condition of the inspiration. As Professor William James has said: "If there were such a thing as inspiration from a higher realm, it might well be that the neurotic temperament would furnish the chief condition of the requisite receptivity" [*Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 19]. Genius may thus have an unstable brain because the higher consciousness is pressing upon it in order to improve the mechanism; so the brain is kept in a state of tension, and under such circumstances it may easily go too far until the structure breaks down under the strain. But the abnormality is on the right, not on the wrong side, being on the very front of the crest of human evolution. It is the instability of growth, not of disease.

An attempt to stimulate the heart-centre is also made in the Christian Church at the time of the reading of the Gospel, the sign of the cross being made by the thumb over the heart-centre, as well as over those between the eyebrows and the throat. This use of the thumb corresponds to a pugnal pass in mesmerism, and seems to be employed when a small but powerful stream of force is required, as for the opening of centres.

The heart is the centre in the body for the higher triad, âtmâ-buddhi-manas. The head is the seat of the psycho-intellectual man, its various functions being in seven cavities, including the pituitary body and the pineal gland.

A man who can take his consciousness from the brain to the heart should be able to unite kâma-manas to higher manas, through lower manas, which, when pure, is the antahkarana; he will then be in a position to catch some of the promptings of the higher triad.

In the Indian methods of Yoga, steps are taken to prevent the dangers of hysteria in those who are coming into touch with the higher planes, insistence being made upon discipline and purification of the body, and control and training of the mind.

The ego frequently puts ideas into the lower consciousness in the form of symbols; each ego has his own system of symbols, though some forms seem general in dreams. Thus for example, it is said that to dream of water signifies trouble of some sort. Now while there may be no real connection between water and troubles, yet if the ego knew that the personality held that particular belief with regard to water, he might very likely choose such a form of symbolism in order to warn the personality of some impending misfortune.

In some cases the ego may manifest himself in a curious external way. Thus, for example, Dr. Annie Besant has said that while she is speaking one sentence of a lecture she habitually sees the next sentence actually materialise in the air before her, in three different forms, from which she consciously selects that one which she thinks best. This must be the work of the ego, though it is a little difficult to understand why he takes this particular method of communication instead of impressing his ideas direct on the physical brain.

The relationship between the personality and the ego is graphically described in [The Voice of The Silence](#): "Have perseverance as one who doth for evermore endure. Thy shadows [i.e., personalities] live and vanish; that which in thee shall live forever, that which in *thee* knows, for it is knowledge, is not of fleeting fleeting life; it is the man that was, and will be, for whom the hour shall never strike."

A vivid description of the ego is given also by H. P. Blavatsky in [The Key To Theosophy](#) : "try to imagine a 'Spirit', a celestial being, whether we call it by one name or another, divine in its essential nature, yet not pure enough to be one with the ALL, and having, in order to achieve this, so to purify its nature as finally to gain that goal. It can do so only by passing, *individually* and *personally*, i.e., spiritually and physically, through every experience and feeling that exists in the manifold or differentiated universe. It has, therefore, after having gained such experience in the lower kingdoms, and having ascended higher and still higher with every rung of the ladder of being, to pass through every experience on the human planes. In its very essence it is Thought, and is, therefore, called in its plurality, *Manasaputra*, 'the Sons of [universal] Mind'. This *individualised* 'Thought' is what we Theosophists call the *real* human Ego, the thinking entity imprisoned in a case of flesh and bones. This is surely a spiritual entity, not *matter* [i.e., matter as we know it in the objective universe], and such entities are the incarnating Egos that inform the bundle of animal matter called mankind, and whose names are *Manasa* or minds".

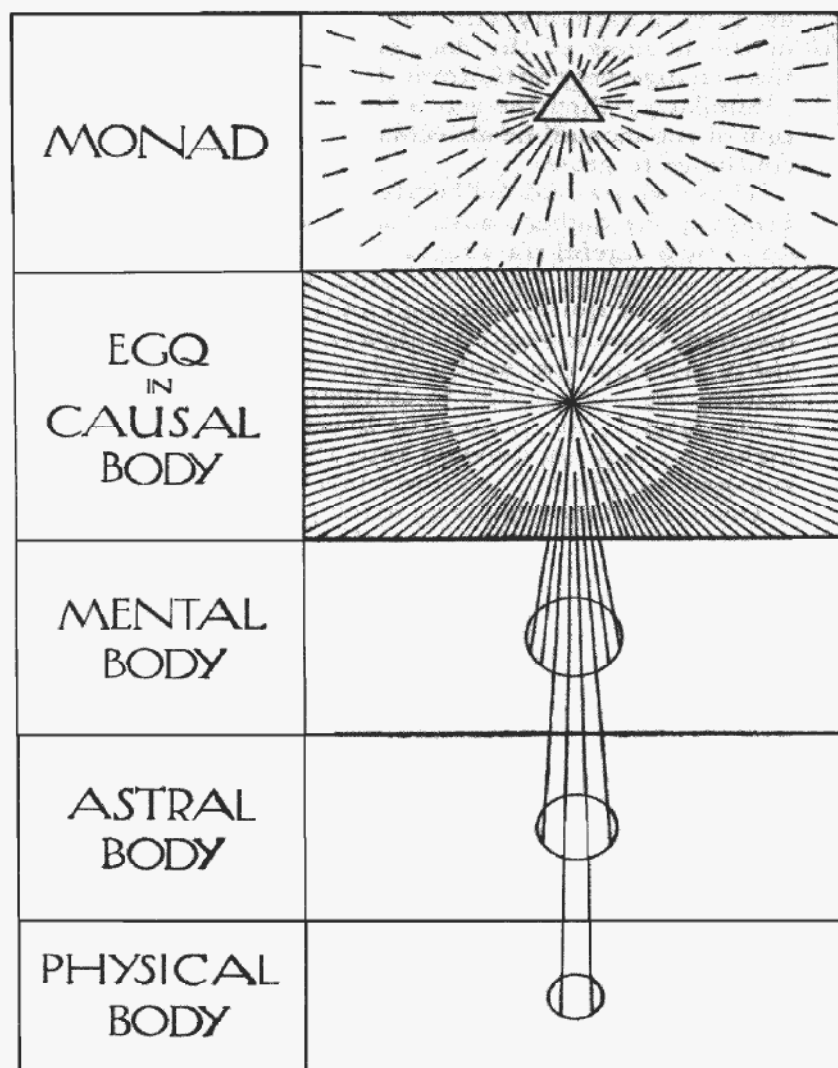
The "ray" of lower manas is ever seeking to return to its source and parent, the higher manas. But while the duality persists, i.e., until the consciousness has been raised to the causal level, thereby "unifying the higher and lower selves," as the phrase goes, there is a continual yearning, which is felt by the noblest and purest natures as one of the most salient facts of the inner life. It is this yearning which clothes itself as prayer, as inspiration, as "seeking after God", as the longing for union with the divine. "My soul is athirst for God, for the living God", cries the eager Christian.

The occultist recognises in this cry the inextinguishable impulse of the lower self to the Higher Self, from which it is separated, but the attraction of which it vividly feels. Whether a man prays to the Buddha, to Vishnu, to Christ, to the Virgin, to the Father, matters little; these are questions of dialect, not of fact. In every prayer the Higehr Manas, united to Buddhi and to Âtmâ, is the real objective, veiled under whatever name time or race may give. It is the ideal humanity, the "personal God", the "God-Man", found in all religions; it is the "God incarnate", the "Word made flesh", the Christ who must be "born" in each, with whom the believer must be made one.

Expressed rather more technically, the individualised "God" in each man, his Father in Heaven, is the monad, and as the ego is to the monad, so is the personality to the ego.

A warning hint, however, may here not be out of place. In the past such expressions as "looking up to the higher self", and "listening to the promptings of the higher self", have been used; and it has even been suggested that the higher self ought to take more interest in the unfortunate personality struggling on its behalf on the lower planes. Gradually the student should come to realise that the personality that we see on the lower planes is but a very small part of the real man, and that the higher self *is* the man. For there is only one consciousness, the lower being an imperfect representation of the higher, and in no way separate from it. Thus, instead of thinking of raising "ourselves" till we can unite with the glorified higher self, we should realise rather that the higher *is* the true self, and that to unite the higher to the lower really means to open out the lower, so that the higher may work more freely and fully in and through it.

A man should thus endeavour to become certain, beyond the possibility of doubt, that he is the spirit or higher self; he should develop confidence in his own powers as the ego, and courage to use those powers freely. Instead of looking upon his usual state of consciousness as natural and normal, and looking upwards towards the ego as a lofty being to be reached by continuous and tremendous effort, he should learn to look upon his ordinary state of consciousness as abnormal and unnatural, and upon the life of the spirit as his own true life, from which by continuous effort he keeps himself estranged.



Expressed in terms of form, when the lower vehicles are fully in harmony with the ego they form themselves in the likeness of the Augoeides [see p. 237]. They then change very little from life to life.

Similarly, when the ego is becoming a perfect reflection of the monad, he also changes but little, though he continues to grow.

Those who would deliberately undertake the task of bringing the higher consciousness into the brain may do so by a careful training of the lower mind and of the moral character, by steady and well directed effort. The habit of quiet, sustained, sequential thought, directed to non-worldly subjects, of meditation, of study, also develops the mental body and renders it a better instrument. The effort to cultivate abstract thinking is also useful, thus raising the lower mind towards the higher, as well as drawing into the mental body the subtlest materials of the lower mental levels.

This Diagram is an attempt to give some idea of the relationship between the ego and his lower vehicles. Of the powers, faculties, and knowledge of the ego on his own plane, only a small fraction can be transmitted to the mental body; from this again, still less penetrates to the astral body; and of this but a fragment reaches

the consciousness in the physical body. One of the aims of the man should be, as we have seen, so to widen and strengthen the link between the ego and the lower bodies that more and more of the powers of the ego can find expression in the lower vehicles of the personality.

Above and beyond the ego resides the Monad, whose relationship to the ego is somewhat similar to that which exists between the ego and the personality.

CHAPTER XXXII

REBIRTH

We now take up the story of the ego and his vehicles at the point where, the period of life on the higher mental plane being ended, the time comes for a fresh incarnation to be undertaken.

It will be recollected that when the ego withdraws into the causal body, he takes with him his physical and astral permanent atoms, and his mental unit or molecule. These particles of matter, one only of each of the three lower planes, remain with the ego throughout the whole of his human incarnations. Whilst they are withdrawn into the causal body they are in a quiescent or latent condition.

When the time for reincarnation comes, the ego turns his attention outwards, whereupon a thrill of life from him arouses the mental unit and the life-web begins to unfold itself; this life-web consists of buddhic matter, and appears as shimmering gold of inconceivable fineness and delicate beauty; it is formed of a single thread, which is

a prolongation of Sutrâtmâ. Into further details of these matters, however, we cannot enter here; the writer hopes to deal with them in a later volume.

The mental unit now resumes activity, because the ego seeking to express himself once more on the lower mental plane, so far as the plasticity of its matter will permit.

Accordingly, the mental unit acts as a magnet, drawing round itself mental matter and mental elemental essence, with vibratory powers resembling, or accordant with, its own, and thus fitted to express its latent mental qualities. The process is in a certain sense automatic, though devas of the Second Elemental Kingdom assist in the process by bringing suitable materials within reach of the mental unit.

The matter is first shaped into a loose cloud around the mental unit; it is *not* as yet a mental body, but merely the materials out of which the new mental body will be built.

Neither are the qualities as yet in any way in action. They are simply the germs of qualities, and for the moment their only influence is to secure for themselves a possible field of manifestation, by providing matter suitable for their expression in the mental vehicle of the child.

The germs or seeds, brought over from the past, are known by the Buddhists as the Skandhas; they consist of material qualities, sensations, abstract ideas, tendencies of mind, mental powers. As we have seen, in the course of our study, the pure aroma of these passed with the Ego into devachan; all that was gross, base and evil, remained in the state of suspended animation spoken of. These are taken up by the Ego as he passes outwards towards terrestrial life, and are built into the new "man of flesh", which the true man is to inhabit.

The experiences of the past do not, of course exist as mental images in the new mental body; as mental images they perished long ago when the old mental body perished; only their essence, their effects on faculty, remain.

Precisely the same thing happens when the ego turns his attention to the astral permanent atom, and puts into it his will. Thus the mental unit and the astral permanent atom attract to themselves material capable of producing a mental and an astral body of exactly the same type as the man had at the end, respectively, of his last mental and astral lives. In other words, the man resumes his life in the mental and astral worlds just where he left it last time.

A man's mental and astral bodies, taken on for his new life-period, being thus the direct result of his past, form a most important part of his "ripe" or Prârabda karma.

The mental matter is at first evenly distributed throughout the ovoid. Only as the little physical form comes into existence are the mental and astral matter attracted to it; they then begin to mould themselves to its shape, and thereafter steadily grow along it. At the same time, with this change in arrangement, the mental and astral matter is called into activity, and emotion and thought appear.

It should be noted that the coarser the kinds of mental matter built into the mental body, the more intimate becomes the association between the mental and astral matter, thus strengthening the element of Kâma-Manas [see Chapter VI].

A young child thus cannot be said to have a definite mental or a definite astral body; but he has around and within him the matter out of which these bodies are to be constructed.

He possesses tendencies of all sorts, some good, some evil. Whether these germs will develop once more in the new life into the same tendencies as in the last life will depend very largely upon the encouragement or otherwise given to them by the surroundings of the child during his early years. Any of them, good or bad, may be readily stimulated into activity, or, on the other hand, may be starved out for lack of that encouragement.

If stimulated, it becomes a more powerful factor in the man's life this time than it was in his previous existence; if starved out it remains merely as an unfructified germ, which presently atrophies and dies out, and does not make its appearance in the succeeding incarnation at all.

During his early years the ego has but little hold over his vehicles, and he therefore looks to his parents to help him to obtain a firmer grasp, and to provide him with suitable conditions. Hence the enormous responsibility resting upon parents.

It is impossible to exaggerate the plasticity of the child's unformed vehicles. Plastic and readily impressible as is the physical body of a young child, his astral and mental vehicles are far more so. They thrill in response to every vibration which they encounter, and are eagerly receptive with regard to all influences, whether good or evil, which emanate from those around them. As in the case of the physical body, whilst the mental and astral bodies are in early youth susceptible and easily moulded, they soon set and stiffen and acquire definite habits which, once firmly established, can be altered only with great difficulty.

To a far larger extent than is ever realised by even the fondest parents, the child's future is under their control.

If we can imagine our friends with all their good qualities enormously intensified, and all the less desirable features weeded out of their characters, then we can picture to ourselves the results which parents can produce in their children if they will do their full duty by them.

The extraordinary sensitiveness to the influence of his surroundings commences as soon as the ego descends upon the embryo, long before birth takes place; it continues, in most cases, up to about the period of maturity.

The mental body, or rather the material out of which the mental body will be built, becomes involved with the lower vehicles during the pre-natal life; the connection becomes more and more close until, at about the end of the seventh year, the lower vehicles are as closely in touch with the ego as the stage of evolution permits. The ego then, if sufficiently advanced, begins slightly to control his vehicles, what we call conscience being his monitory voice.

During the pre-natal period the ego broods over the human mother in whom his future body is building, but the ego can affect the embryo but little, save through a feeble influence from the physical permanent atom; the embryo cannot respond to, and therefore does not share, the thoughts and emotions of the ego expressed in his causal body.

The Hindus had various ceremonies by which they surrounded with pure influences both mother and child before and after birth. The object was to create special conditions which warded off the lower influences and brought in the higher influences. Such ceremonies were very valuable.

The "seeds" of evil which are brought by a child in his permanent atoms have often been called "original sin" though they are wrongly connected with the fabled action of Adam and Eve. In the Christian Church the sacrament of baptism is intended specifically to help in reducing to a minimum the effects of the seeds of evil.

To this end magnetised or "holy" water is employed; by its means the priest is able to set strongly in vibration the etheric matter of the child's body, to stimulate the pituitary body, and through it affect the astral body and through that in turn the mental body. The force which is poured in rushes down and up again until, like water, it finds its own level.

The "exorcism" performed by the priest is intended to bind down the germs of evil in their present condition, and to prevent them being fed or encouraged in any way, so that eventually they atrophy and fall out.

In addition, in the ceremony as performed in the Liberal Catholic Church at least, the priest making the sign of the cross down the whole length of the front and back of the child's body, builds a thought-form or artificial elemental [which has given rise to the idea of the baptismal guardian angel], which is filled by the divine force, and which is also ensouled by a higher kind of nature-spirit known as a sylph. The thought-form is a kind of cuirass of white light before and behind the child. Incidentally, through association with the thought-form which is permeated by the life and thought of the Christ Himself, the sylph eventually individualises and becomes a seraph.

Even if the child dies almost immediately, the baptism may be of value to it on the other side of death. For it would be quite possible for the germs of evil to be stimulated into activity in the astral world, and the thought-form may be of assistance in preventing such action.

Thus, in baptism, not only are certain centres or chakrams in the child aroused and opened to spiritual influence, but also the germs of evil are to some extent repressed, and the child is endowed with what is practically a guardian angel, a new and powerful influence for good.

It may be added that the cross which is made on the forehead of the child with the consecrated oil is visible in the etheric double all through the life of the person; it is the sign of the Christian, precisely as the tilaka spot, or caste-mark in the case of the Hindu, is the sign of Shiva or the trident of Vishnu.

The aura of a child is often a most beautiful object, pure and bright in colour, free from the clouds of sensuality, avarice, ill-will and selfishness which so frequently darken all the life of the adult. It is pathetic to perceive the change which almost invariably comes over the child-aura as the years pass on; to note how persistently evil tendencies are fostered and strengthened by his environment, and how entirely good ones are neglected. With such object-lessons before one, one ceases to wonder at the extraordinary slowness of human evolution, and the almost imperceptible progress which most egos make for life after life spent in the lower world.

The remedy lies with parents and teachers, the effect of whose personal character, behaviour and habits on the development of children is almost incalculable. It should be unnecessary, at this stage of our study, again to emphasise the great importance of the thoughts and emotions of parents and teachers on their charges. This subject is dealt with at length by C.W. Leadbeater in *The Hidden Side of Things*, Vol. II, p. 287-312.

In the Atlantean civilisation the importance of the office of the teacher was so fully recognised that none was permitted to hold it but a trained clairvoyant, who could see all the latent qualities and capabilities of his charges, and could therefore work intelligently with each, so as to develop the good and amend the evil. In the distant future of the Sixth Root-Race this principle will be applied even more completely.

With whatever care parents may surround a child, it is practically inevitable that the child will some day encounter evil influences in the world, which will tend to stimulate evil tendencies in himself. But it makes a vast difference whether the good or the evil tendencies are stimulated *first*. In most cases the evil is awakened into activity before the ego has any hold upon the vehicles, so that when he does grasp them he finds that he has to combat a strong predisposition to various evils. When the germs of good are tardily aroused they have to struggle to assert themselves against evil tendencies already firmly established.

On the other hand, if the parents by exceeding care before birth, and for several years after it, have been able to excite only good tendencies, then, as the ego gains control, he finds it easy to express himself along those lines, a habit having been established. If then an evil excitation comes, it finds a strong momentum in the direction of good, which it strives in vain to overcome.

The ego, unless he is unusually advanced, has but little command over his vehicles at first; but it must be borne in mind that his will is always for good, because he desires to evolve himself by means of his vehicles, and such power as he is able to throw into the balance will always therefore be on the right side.

During the embryonic and infantile life the ego is carrying on his own wider, richer life, and, as said, gradually comes more and more closely into touch with the embryo.

We may note here that the relation of the Monad to the universe, in which his consciousness is evolving, is analogous to that of the ego in relation to his new physical body.

Since the mental body is a new one, it naturally cannot contain the memory of previous births, in which it had no part. Such memory clearly belongs to the ego, in the causal body, who, together with his permanent atoms, alone persists from one incarnation to another. Hence a man functioning in the physical world cannot remember his past lives, so long as he remembers only by means of his mental body.

In the development of the human body the gestation period corresponds to the downward course of the elemental kingdoms; from birth to the age of seven it is considered by many educationists that the child's physical nature should receive most attention ; up to the age of about fourteen the development of emotions should have chief consideration; up to the age of about twenty-one the teacher should appeal especially to the unfolding of the mind.

These last three ages may be taken to correspond to a certain extent to the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms. In the first, consciousness is on the physical plane; in the second, on the emotional plane; in the third, the lower mind gradually gains ground, and leads on to the stage when man becomes the true thinker. The long period of middle life is the real human career. The epoch of old age should bring wisdom; this is as yet imperfect in most people, being but an adumbration of the superhuman heights of future attainment.

It is necessary to mention here a curious eventuality which, in certain rare cases, may occur when a man is re-born. In Chapter VI we saw how, if a man leads a thoroughly degraded life, identifying himself entirely with the lower, animal nature, and neglecting the higher, the lower nature is severed wholly from the higher, and the incarnation is a total loss to the ego.

Under such conditions the ego has become so disgusted with his vehicles that, when death relieves him of the physical body, he casts the others aside also; in fact, he may even during physical life leave the desecrated temple.

After death, such an ego, having no astral or mental body, will reincarnate quickly. This being so, the old mental and astral vehicles may not yet have disintegrated, but may, by natural affinity, be drawn to the new mental and astral bodies; they then become the most terrible form of what is known as the "dweller on the threshold".

CHAPTER XXXIII

DISCIPLESHIP

The control, training and development of the mental body [as well, of course, as the astral] form an important part of the work of one who aims at becoming a pupil, or *chela*, of a Master and, later, an Initiate of the Great White Brotherhood.

The following is a table of the four well-known "Qualifications" for the Path which leads to Initiation. It will be seen that in practically all of these there is a mental element.

THE QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE PATH		
No.	Sanskrit	English
1	Viveka	Discrimination between the real and the unreal; also described as the opening of the doors of the mind.
2	Vairāgya	Indifference to the unreal, the transitory, and to the fruits of action: non-attachment
3	Shatsampati:-	Sixfold mental attributes: -
	-1-Shama	Control of thought
	-2-Dama	Control of action
	-3-Uparati	Tolerance
	-4-Titiksha	Endurance

	-5-Shraddhâ	Faith
	-6-Samâdhâna	Balance
4	Mumuksha	Desire for liberation

Volumes have been written on the Qualifications: here space will permit of the briefest description only. They are not expected in perfection, but they must be at least partially possessed before Initiation is possible.

Vivekâ: The aspirant must learn that the inner life, the life of and for the ego, is the real life; he must learn, as C.W. Leadbeater succinctly puts it, that "few things matter much: most things do not matter at all".

Needless to say, this does not mean that worldly duties and responsibilities, once undertaken, may or should be neglected; on the contrary, they should be performed by the occultist even more scrupulously and carefully than by other men. It is the spirit in which they are done which matters, the recognition of the aspect of them which is important, and those aspects which are not important.

This "opening of the doors of the mind", or "conversion" as it has been called, is precisely that which is spoken of in the bible: "Set your affection on things above and not on things of the earth...for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal."

Discrimination is much stimulated by the rapidly changing circumstances into which the disciple is generally thrown, with a view to impressing on him the instability of all external things. The life of a disciple is generally one of storm and stress, in order that qualities and faculties may be forced into swift growth and speedily brought to perfection.

Vairagyâ: From a recognition of the instability and unsatisfying nature of external things, indifference to them naturally follows. The aspirant becomes indifferent to things that come and go, and more and more he fixes his attention on the changeless reality that is ever present.

Shama: The need for control of thought has already been amply emphasised in this present volume.

The pupil must reduce the chaos of his emotions and thoughts to order ; he must eliminate the host of minor interests, and control wandering thoughts. Whilst he still lives in the world, the difficulty of the undertaking is multiplied manifold by the ceaseless pressure of disturbing waves of emotion and thought, which give him no rest, no opportunity to collect his forces in order to make a real effort.

Steady, daily practice in concentration and meditation is a method that many find suitable. The aspirant must work with great energy and perseverance to reduce the mental rebel to order and discipline, knowing that the great increase in thought-power which will accompany his rapid growth will prove a danger to others and to himself, unless the force be thoroughly under his control. Better give a child dynamite to play with, than place the creative powers of thought in the hands of the selfish and the ambitious.

Dama: To inner control must be added the control of outer actions. As the mind obeys the soul so must the lower nature obey the mind. Carelessness in the lower part of human activity must be eliminated.

Uparati : The sublime and far-reaching virtue of tolerance means the quiet acceptance of each man, each form of existence , as it is, without demand that it should be something different, shaped more to one's own liking. Respect for the individuality of others is one of the marks of the disciple.

Titiksha: Endurance means an attitude of mind that cheerfully bears all and resents nothing, going straight onwards unswervingly to the goal. The aspirant knows that nothing can come to him but by the Law, and the Law is good. He must realise that as he is paying in a few short lives the karmic obligations accumulated during the

past, the payments must be correspondingly heavy.

Shraddhâ: The very struggles, in which the aspirant is plunged, develop in him faith in his Master, and in himself, a serene, strong confidence that is unshakeable.

Sâmadhâna: Balance, or equilibrium, grows to some extent without conscious effort during the striving after the previous five qualifications. The soul gradually disentangles itself from ties that knit it to the world of sense, the objects in which "turn away from abstemious dweller in the body", and soon lose all power to disturb his balance. Balance amid mental troubles of every kind is also necessary, this balance being further taught by the swift changes, mentioned above, through which his life is guided by the ever-watchful care of his Master.

Mumuksha: The deep, intense longing for liberation, that yearning of the soul towards union with the Divine, follows on the attainment of the other Qualifications. This adds the last touch to the readiness to enter into full discipleship. Once the longing has definitely asserted itself, the soul that has felt it can never again quench its thirst at earthly fountains.

The attainment of this stage makes the man ready for Initiation, an Adhikari, ready to "enter the stream" that cuts him off forever from the interests of earthly life, save as he can serve his Master in them and help forward the evolution of humanity.

This hunger for the things of the spirit appears to be represented in Freemasonry by the inner attitude of the Candidate in "humbly soliciting to be admitted to the mysteries and privileges of Ancient Freemasonry". In this attitude, as every Freemason knows, the emphasis is on the urge from within the Candidate himself; no man can tread the occult path on the inspiration of another.

In the Buddhist system the names given to the stage are somewhat different, though the qualifications themselves are the same in effect. The following is the Pali nomenclature:-

1. Manodvâravajjana. The opening of the doors of the mind, or perhaps escaping by the doors of the mind. A conviction of the impermanence and worthlessness of mere earthly aims.
2. Parikamma. Preparation for action. Doing right for right's sake, with complete indifference to the enjoyment of the fruit of action.
3. Upacharo. Attention or conduct.
-----[1] Samo. Quietude of thought that comes from control of mind.
-----[2] Damo. Subjugation; mastery over words and actions.
-----[3] Uparati. Cessation from bigotry or belief in the necessity of ceremonies. Hence, independence of thought and tolerance.
-----[4] Titikshâ. Endurance or forbearance, including complete absence of resentment.
-----[5] Samadhana. Intentness, one-pointedness, involving the incapability of being turned aside by temptation.
-----[6] Saddha. Faith; confidence in one's Master and one's self.
4. Anuloma. Direct order of succession, signifying that it follows naturally from the other three; intense desire for liberation.
5. Gotrabhû. The condition of fitness for Initiation.

The student will readily perceive that these Qualifications necessarily follow from ego-consciousness. For if we can look on life from the world of the ego, we see it in true perspective, *i.e.*, with discrimination; and the ego-consciousness being disentangled from the lower bodies, desirelessness is inevitable. Further, since conduct will be that of the ego himself, instead of that of the bodies, shatsampatti or control of conduct will necessarily follow. And, as the world of the ego is the world of unity, of love in its widest sense, ego-consciousness implies love, a word which is sometimes used to designate, from a somewhat different angle, the last of the four qualities, Mumuksha, or longing for liberation.

When a man appears to be reasonably near the possession of the necessary qualifications, a Master may take him upon "probation". This means that the man will remain for a period under very close observation. During the period of probation, the pupil is not in any sense in any kind of direct communication with the Master; he is little likely to hear or to see anything of him. Nor as a general rule are any special trials or difficulties put in his way. He is simply carefully watched in his attitude towards all the little daily troubles of life.

For convenience of observation, the Master makes what is called a "living image" of the probationary pupil, that is to say an exact duplicate of the man's etheric, astral, and causal bodies. This image He keeps in a place where He can easily reach it, and He places it in magnetic *rapport* with the man himself, so that every modification of thought or feeling in the man's own vehicles is faithfully reproduced in the image.

These images are examined daily by the Master, who in this way obtains with a minimum of trouble a perfectly accurate record of His prospective pupil's thoughts and feelings, from which He is able to decide when He can take him into the far closer relationship of the Accepted pupil, which relationship we shall describe presently.

There is not generally much ceremony in this step. The master gives a few words of advice, tells the new pupil what will be expected of him, and often, in His gracious way, he may find some reason to congratulate the pupil on the work that he has already accomplished.

The living image records not only defects or disturbances; it mirrors the whole condition of the pupil's consciousness. It must be remembered that the pupil must achieve not only a passive, but also an active goodness, as a pre-requisite for advancement.

If a pupil on probation does something unusually good, for the moment the Master flashes a little more attention on him, and may even send a wave of encouragement of some sort, or he may put some work in the pupil's way, and see how he does it. Generally however, He delegates that to some of His senior pupils.

Thus the link between the pupil and his Master is chiefly one of observation, and perhaps occasional use of the pupil. It is not the custom of the adepts to employ special or sensational tests; the pupil is usually left to follow the ordinary course of his life, the living image affording sufficient indication of his character and progress.

The average time for probation is said to be seven years; but it may be indefinitely lengthened, or on the other hand it may be very much shortened. It has been known to extend for thirty years, and it has been known to be reduced to a few weeks.

On the probationary path, the man's highest consciousness works upon the higher mental plane.

When a pupil is "accepted", he is taken into his Master's consciousness to so great an extent that whatever he sees or hears is within the knowledge of his Master. Not that the Master sees or hears it at the same moment, though that often happens, but that it lies within the Master's memory, exactly as it lies within the memory of the pupil, so that He could recollect it at any time that He chose to do so. Whatever the pupil feels or thinks is thus within the astral and mental bodies of his Master.

The master in this way blends the aura of the pupil with His own, so that His forces may be constantly acting, without special attention on His part, through the pupil.

It must not be thought that a mere unconscious channel is required; on the contrary, the pupil must become a keenly intelligent co-operator.

If, unfortunately, it should happen that there comes into the mind of the pupil some thought which is not fit to be harboured by the Master, as soon as He feels it, he at once erects a barrier, and shuts off from himself that vibration. To do this of course diverts His attention for a moment from His other work, and takes a certain amount of energy.

The union between the pupil and the Master, that begins with Acceptance, is permanent, so that the higher vehicles of the pupil are always vibrating in common with those of his Master. The whole time he is being tuned up, thus growing more and more like the Master. At all times the thoughts of the pupil are largely preoccupied with thoughts of his Master and His influence, so that, while he is sensitively open to Him, he is to a considerable extent closed to lower influences.

It is not, however, expected that a pupil shall be actively thinking of nothing else but his Master; but it is expected that the form of the Master shall always be in the background of his mind, always within the immediate reach, always there when needed in the vicissitudes of life. Whilst reasonable relaxation and change of thought are necessary to mental health, the pupil should, of course, be scrupulously careful to permit no thought, even for a moment, which he would be ashamed for his Master to see.

The process of attuning can take place only slowly; a living being is being moulded, and it is essential that the slow growth from within should adapt the form to the outside influence, much as a gardener gradually directs the limbs of a tree.

Although the Master is working upon thousands of people simultaneously, as well as doing other and much higher work, yet the effect is as though He were watching the pupil and thinking of no one else, for the attention that He can give to one among hundreds is greater than ours when we concentrate it entirely upon one. The Master often leaves to some of His older pupils the work of tuning the lower bodies, though He Himself is allowing a constant flow between His vehicles and those of the pupil. It is in this way that he does most for His pupils, without their necessarily knowing anything about it.

The accepted pupil thus becomes an outpost of the Master's consciousness, so that whatever is done in his presence is done in the Master's presence. Although the Master may be unconscious of such events at the time when they happen, nevertheless they are, as said, in His memory afterwards. The experiences of the pupil are thus in the master's mind among His own knowledge, as soon as He turns His attention to the subject concerned.

Even purely physical things, such as a slight shock or noise, in the consciousness of the pupil, are also in the consciousness of the Master. A wise pupil, therefore, tries to avoid any kind of shock, and for that reason he is usually a gentle and quiet sort of person.

A pupil is always connected with His Master by a constant current of thought and influence, which expresses itself on the mental plane as a great ray or stream of dazzling light of all colours, violet and gold and blue.

When however, the pupil sends a thought of devotion to his Master, the result is a sudden intensification of the colours of this bar of light, and a distinct flow of spiritual influence from the Master *towards the pupil*. The reason for this is that the Master's power is flowing outwards always and in all directions like the sunlight. The touch of the pupil's thought vivifies his connection with the Master and simply gives a wider opening through which the great ocean of the Master's love can find vent.

So intimate is the union between the consciousness of the pupil and his Master that [as mentioned in Chapter XI] the pupil can at any time see what His Master's thought is upon any given subject, and in that way often save himself from error.

This privilege must not be misused. It is a power of ultimate reference in questions of great difficulty; it is not

intended that the pupil should save himself the trouble of thinking, or of deciding ordinary matters which he is quite competent to determine for himself.

In a similar manner, at a higher level, the Initiate may place his thought beside that of the Brotherhood, and draw into himself just as much of that tremendous consciousness as he, at his level, is able to respond to. The Initiate, similarly, must strive never to introduce anything discordant into that mighty consciousness, which is acting as a whole.

We may repeat here what was said in Chapter XI, viz., that the Master can at any moment send a thought through the pupil, either in the form of a suggestion or a message, e.g., when the pupil is writing a letter or delivering a lecture. In earlier stages the pupil is often unconscious of this, but he very soon learns to recognise the thought of the Master. In fact, it is eminently necessary that he should learn to recognise it, because there are many other entities on the astral and mental planes who may make similar suggestions, and it is well that the pupil should learn to distinguish from whom they came.

The use by a Master of His pupil's body is entirely different from what is ordinarily understood by mediumship. The mechanism and rationale of mediumship has already been explained in [The Etheric Double](#) and *The Astral Body*, together with the objections to it. To the use by a Master of a pupil's body there can, of course, be no objections.

The influence of a Master is so powerful that it may well shine through to almost any extent, and a sensitive person might be conscious of His presence even to the extent of seeing His features or hearing His voice instead of those of the pupil. It is improbable that there will be any purely physical change, though this of course frequently happens in mediumship.

Neither is the relationship between Master and pupil in any way one of coercion, or one in which the pupil's individuality is submerged in the flood of power from the Master. On the contrary, the Master's influence is not a hypnotic force from without, but an inexpressibly wonderful illumination from within, irresistible because so deeply felt as in perfect accord with the pupil's highest aspiration, and as the self-revelation of his own spiritual nature. The Master being Himself in fullest measure a channel of the Divine life, that which flows from Him awakens into activity the seed of Divinity within the pupil. The process is somewhat analogous to that of electrical induction. It is because of the *identity* of nature in the two that the influence of the Master stimulates in the highest degree all the noblest and highest qualities in the pupil. The love of the Master for a disciple may be likened to the sunshine which opens the lotus bud to the morning air; it may in truth be said that one smile from the Master will call forth from the pupil such an outburst of affection as would be gained only by months of scholastic meditation on the virtue of love.

From the above it is clear that any disturbance in the lower bodies of the pupil will affect also those of the Master. Should such disturbance occur, the Master drops a veil that shuts the pupil off from Himself, lest there be interference with His own work. Such an unfortunate incident does not usually last longer than forty-eight hours, but in extreme, and very rare, cases, it may endure for years, or even for the remainder of that incarnation.

Practically all ordinary people turn their forces inward upon themselves, and thus become a jangling mass of self-centred forces. One who would become an accepted pupil must learn to turn himself outwards, concentrating his attention and strength upon others, pouring out helpful thoughts and good wishes upon his fellow-men.

Thus the disciple, and even the aspirant for discipleship, is taught to hold all powers entirely for the service of the world. The sharing by the lower consciousness of the knowledge of the higher is determined mainly by the needs of the work that is being done.

Whilst it is necessary that the disciple should have the full use of his vehicles on the higher planes, the conveyance of a knowledge of that work to the physical body [which is in no way concerned with it] is usually a matter of no importance. The strain upon the physical body, when the higher consciousness compels it to vibrate responsively, is very great, at the present stage of evolution, and unless external circumstances are very favourable, this strain is apt to cause nervous disturbance and hyper-sensitiveness, with its attendant evils. Hence

most of those whose higher vehicles are developed, and whose most important work is done out of the physical body, remain apart from the busy haunts of men, thus preserving the sensitive physical body from the rough usage and clamour of ordinary life.

Furthermore, as soon as a pupil shows any signs of psychic faculty, full instructions are always given to him as to the limitations which are placed on its use.

Briefly, these restrictions are that such faculty shall not be used [1] to satisfy mere curiosity, [2] for selfish purposes, [3] in order to display phenomena. That is to say, the same considerations which govern the actions of a man of right feeling on the physical plane are expected to apply also on the astral and mental planes; the pupil is never under any circumstances to use his additional power to promote his own worldly advantage, or in connection with gain in any way; and he is never to give what is called in spiritualistic circles a "test" *i.e.*, any indisputable physical plane proof of abnormal power.

There is always a gentle radiation of the Master's influence flowing through the pupil, even though the pupil be not conscious of it. At certain times the pupil may feel a greatly increased flow of force, although he may not know where it is going. With a little careful attention he can learn in which direction it is going, and a little later he can follow it more definitely with his consciousness and trace it to the actual people who are being affected by it. The pupil, however, cannot direct it, being simply a channel. Later, the Master may tell the pupil to seek out a person and give him some of the force. As the pupil increases in usefulness, more and more of the work is placed in his hands, thus relieving, even only in small degree, the strain upon the Master. Occasionally a pupil may even be given a definite message to deliver to a particular person.

It is possible to obtain constant contact with the Master in another way. Just as images of persons made by a man in devachan are filled with life by the egos of the persons concerned, so the Master fills with His real presence the thought-form produced by His pupil. Through that form real inspiration and sometimes instruction may be given. An example of this was that of a Hindu yogi in the Madras Presidency, who claimed to be a pupil of the Master Morya. Having met his Master physically and become His pupil, the yogi claimed that he did not lose his Master after he went away, for he used frequently to appear to him and instruct him through a centre within himself.

There is yet a third stage of even more intimate union, when a pupil becomes the "son" of the Master. The link is such that not only the lower mind, but also the ego in the causal body of the pupil, is enfolded within that of the Master; the Master can then no longer draw a veil to cut off the pupil, so as to separate the consciousness even for a moment.

An accepted pupil has the right, and the duty, to bless in the name of the Master, and a splendid outpouring of the Master's power will assuredly follow his effort to do so. The Son of the Master can give the very touch of the Master's intimate presence. He who is a Son of the Master either is or soon will be a member of the great White Brotherhood also; that, of course, confers the power of blessing in the name of the Brotherhood.

In the Greater Mysteries, celebrated principally at Eleusis, the initiates were named *epoptai*, that is "those whose eyes were opened". Their emblem was the golden fleece of Jason, the symbol of the mental body. The pupil was shown the effect in the heaven-world of a certain line of life, study and aspiration on earth; he was also taught the whole history of the evolution of the world and of man, in its deeper aspect.

The pupil further received not only teachings about the conditions of the mental plane, but also instruction as to the development of the mental body as a vehicle.

Freemasons will be interested to note that an ear of corn was shown to the aspirant as symbolical of the supreme mystery at Eleusis, and is probably connected with the fact that a sheaf of corn is often carved on the chair of the S.W. in a Masonic Lodge.

When a man is Initiated, the influence to which he has tuned himself on higher planes rushes through every part of his being. Though there is little effect in the solids, liquids, and gases of the physical plane, there is a great deal of

radiation from the etheric double, and from his astral and mental bodies, and this is felt both by the kingdom of nature, and by such men as are in a condition to respond.

A very great expansion and development of the mental body takes place in connection with the Second Initiation, but it is usually some years before the effects can show themselves in the physical brain. They unquestionably put a great strain on the brain, as it cannot be instantaneously tuned to the necessary pitch.

The period after the Second Initiation is in many ways the most dangerous anywhere on the Path, the danger in nearly all cases coming through pride. When a man gets a glimpse of what his intellect will be in the future, he must guard against and kill out every trace of pride, selfishness and prejudice.

This danger-point in the life on the Initiate is indicated in the Gospel story by the temptation in the wilderness, which followed the Baptism of Christ by John. The forty days in the wilderness symbolise the period during which the expansion of the mental body is being worked down into the physical brain, though for the ordinary candidate some forty years might well be required for its accomplishment.

The "I-making" faculty, the Ahamkâra [see p. 266] which is generally described as mâna, pride, since pride is the subtlest manifestation of the "I" as distinct from others, is the last fetter of separateness which the Arhat casts off before he takes the Fifth Initiation and becomes a Master, an Asekha. Ahamkara was born with the soul, is the essence of individuality, and persists till all that is valuable in it is worked into the Monad; it is finally dropped on the threshold of liberation.

In that survival of the Ancient Mysteries known as Freemasonry, the E.A. corresponds to the stage of the Probationary pupil, and is required to practise the three qualities of discrimination, desirelessness, and good conduct or self-control [Viveka, Vairâgya and Shatsampatti]. Discrimination will give him mental power; desirelessness emotional power; self-control will-power.

Discrimination enables the candidate to pass unscathed through the lower regions of the astral world, represented [in Co-Masonry] in the First Symbolical Journey.

Desirelessness enables him to pass through the allurements of the higher astral world, represented in the Second Symbolical Journey.

Good conduct will enable him to master the highest part of the astral world, on the very borders of the heaven-world, represented in the Third Symbolical Journey.

The g... of the First Degree indicates the necessity of conquering the desire nature.

The general effect of the First Degree is to widen somewhat the channel of connection between the ego and the personality of the candidate.

The master-colour of the First Degree is crimson.

The E.A. in Freemasonry corresponds to the Sub-Deacon in the Christian Church.

The p ... g... between the First and the Second Degree indicates the necessity of conquering that peculiar entanglement of the lower mind in the meshes of desire which we know as Kâma-Manas.

In the Second Degree, the idea of illumination is put before the candidate, the special object being the development of the intellectual, artistic and psychic faculties, and the control of the lower mind. The effect of the Degree is a more decided widening of the link between the ego and the personality.

The g... of the Second Degree indicates the need of full control of the lower mind.

The master-colour of the Second Degree is yellow.

The F.C. in Freemasonry corresponds to the order of deacon in the Christian Church, for just as the F.C is preparing himself for the work of the M.M., so is the deacon preparing himself for the work of the Priesthood.

The p...g... between the Second and the Third Degree indicates the necessity of gaining some mastery over the strange intermediate tract beyond the lower mind which in a certain school of thought, is denominated the subliminal consciousness.

In the Third degree, the work is principally on the higher mental plane. The predominant colour is a blue tinge. The M.M. corresponds to the Priest in the Church.

In the First Degree, the Idâ, or feminine aspect of the etheric force, is stimulated, thus making it easier for the man to control passion and emotion. The Idâ starts from the base of the spine on the left of a man, and the right of a woman, and ends in the medulla oblongata. It is crimson in colour.

In the Second degree, the Pingalâ or masculine aspect of the force is strengthened, thus facilitating the control of mind. Pingalâ starts from the base of the spine on the right of a man, and the left of a woman, ending in the medulla oblongata. It is yellow in colour.

In the Third degree, the Sushumnâ, the central energy itself, is aroused, thus opening the way for the influence of the pure spirit from on high. It is deep blue in colour.

The E.A., as a *personality*, should organise his physical life for higher use; as an *ego* he should be developing active intelligence in his causal body. For this he must use his will, the First Person of the Trinity, the power of Shiva [to employ the Hindu terminology], reflected by his outward-turned power, or shakti, Devî Girijâ or Parvatî, who gives self-control, and who blesses the physical body and makes its powers holy.

The F.C., as a *personality*, is organising his emotional life; as an *ego* he is unfolding intuitional love in his buddhic body. This he does with the power of the Second Person of the Trinity, the love that comes from Vishnu, through Lakshmi, who fulfils desires and makes life rich and full, sanctifying material prosperity and transmuting the passions of the astral body.

The M.M., as a *personality*, is arranging his mental life; as an *ego* he is strengthening his spiritual will –âtmâ. To conquer the wavering mind he must use the power of thought, or kriyîshakti, the divine activity of the Third Person of the Trinity, Brahmî, reflected by Saraswati, the patroness of learning and practical wisdom.

At the same time, the E.A. should also be learning to control his emotions, the F.C. should be mastering his mind, and the M.M. should be developing on higher planes.

For the convenience of the student, most of the above facts, together with some further ones, are tabulated as follows : -

ITEM	E.A.	F.C.	M.M.
Work as Personality	Organisation of physical life, and learning to control emotion	Organisation of emotional life, and learning to master mind	Organisation of mental life, and development on higher plane
Work as Ego	Development of active intelligence in causal body	Development of Intuitional love in buddhic body	Development of Atmâ or will
Under influence of Trinity			

--English	First Person	Second Person	Third Person
--Sanskrit	Shiva	Vishnu	Brahmâ
Whose outward-turned power, Shakti, or Devi, is:-			
--English	Will	Love	Activity
--Sanskrit	Girijâ or Parvati	Lakshmi	Sarawati
Whose function is	to give sel-control, to bless the physical body	to confer material prosperity	to confer knowledge
Assisted by	J.W.	S.W.	W.M.
-Who are represented by	Moon	Sun	Fire
Chakram used	Throat	Heart	Navel
Etheric force, or Nadi stimulated	Idâ	Pingalâ	Sushumnâ
Aspect	Feminine	Maxculine	Pure spirit
Position			
Men	Left	Right	Centre
Women	Right	Left	Centre
Colour	Crimson	Yellow	Deep blue
Path of	Ordinary man	Occult aspirant	Ascension
Corresponds to	Probationary Pupil	Pupil on the Path	Fourth Initiation (Arhat)
Corresponds in Christian Church	Sub-Deacon	Deacon	Priest
Re-birth	After interval	After short interval, or none	Voluntarily only

In the various Degrees in Freemasonry, not only is the link between the personality and ego widened, but also a link is formed between certain principles of the candidate and the corresponding vehicles of the H.O.A.T.F. The changes induced are somewhat of the same nature as those that occur in the Christian Church, as will be mentioned presently.

The Lord Buddha was once asked by a disciple to sum up the whole of His teaching in one verse. He replied:-

-----Cease to do evil
-----Learn to do well
-----Cleanse your own heart;
-----This is the religion of the Buddha

The student will recognise here a correspondence with the Masonic system, as well indeed as with other systems. The teaching of the First Degree is that of purification. The Second Degree instructs him to acquire knowledge. The Third degree instructs the man to rise to a higher level and to consider not merely the outward action, but also the inner condition of which all outer manifestation should be an expression.

For purposes of reference and comparison the student may like to examine the following table, which sets out the main features of the system in Christianity, as followed in the Liberal Catholic Church:-

Minor Orders	Symbols	Application of Symbols	Ceremony acts principally upon
Cleric	Surplice	Control of physical body	Etheric Double
Doorkeeper	Key and Bell	Control of emotion	Astral Body
Reader	Book	Control of mind	Mental Body
Exorcist	Sword and Book	Development of will and fuller control by ego of vehicles	Causal Body
Acolyte	Lighted Candle Cruet	Development of intuition	Buddhic Body
Sub-Deacon	Amice Maniple Tunicle Chalice and Paten Book of Epistles	Control of speech Love of service; diligence in good works Spirit of joy and gladness	General purpose is to enable the ego to express himself more fully through the personality
Deacon	Dalmatic: White Stole (over left shoulder) Book of Gospels		Widens link between ego and personality (antakana), thickening and hardening walls so as to hold them more firmly in their new form. Carries process a little further so as to strengthen buddhi (intuition). Higher Manas is connected with corresponding principle of the Christ
Priest	White Stole (over both shoulders) Chasuble Chalice Wine		Link between Atmâ-Buddhi-Manas opened up and greatly widened Ego more definitely awakened so that he can act upon others at the causal level, and express himself more fully through buddhi. Whole aura expanded prodigiously Way cleared between higher principles and

	Water Paten Waver		physical brain. Every atom shaken as its spirillae are aroused Buddhi connected with corresponding principle of the Christ Atmâ stimulated by sympathetic vibration
Bishop	Crosier Pectoral Cross Ring Book of Gospels Mitre Gloves		Atmâ connected with corresponding principle of the Christ

CHAPTER XXXIV

CONCLUSION

Few words are necessary in bringing to a close this study of man's mental body and the lower mental plane. It may, however, be useful to look back over the ground we have covered and endeavour to obtain a perspective view of the relative importance and significance of our subject matter, in its setting amongst the totality of our knowledge of modern Theosophy.

The student cannot help being struck by the great difference between the "atmosphere" of the mental world and that of the astral world –let alone that of the physical. By comparison with the mental world, the astral world is heavy, crude, turgid, and unsatisfying, even at its loftiest levels. However pure and refined the state of feeling to which it may raise us, we feel that we are still far from our true home. The dignity of man's soul demands more than feeling, however pure and unselfish.

The mental plane –even its four lower levels - conveys the impression that we are distinctly nearer "home". Here there is more of freedom; we feel that we are more the masters of our own consciousness, less the servants of our vehicles. The mental world seems a cleaner and more wholesome world, where we can shape our destiny nearer to our will than seems possible in the worlds we have left below us. Consciousness is freer to roam where it will, far less restricted by the limitations of space and time.

Nevertheless, mastery of even the lower mental world, of the totality of concrete thinking, leaves us still unsatisfied, for through it and beyond it we can plainly sense that there are yet fresh and greater worlds to conquer.

This world of concrete thought is as far as we can go while we still belong to the lower planes. To plant our feet firmly on this thought-world, and reach upwards to the very abstractions of thought - this surely will bring us to the threshold of a world higher and purer, not only in *degree*, but in *kind*, than any of the lower worlds.

Through those abstractions we shall rise to the world of the spirit, and draw appreciably nearer to the God-consciousness from which we feel and know ourselves to be temporarily exiled.

But we must not minimise the vast importance of the lower mental world, especially at the present juncture in man's psychological history. Let us, therefore, recapitulate in briefest form the outstanding features which emphasise the importance of mind, and of the mental world, to men in their evolution.

In the Scheme of seven Chains, to which we belong, every Chain has globes on the lower mental plane, while six of the seven Chains have also globes on the higher mental plane. Of the forty-nine globes in all, twenty-four, or practically half, are on the mental plane. The following diagram sets out these facts clearly, the mental globes

being blacked-in solid, in order to emphasise the points mentioned.

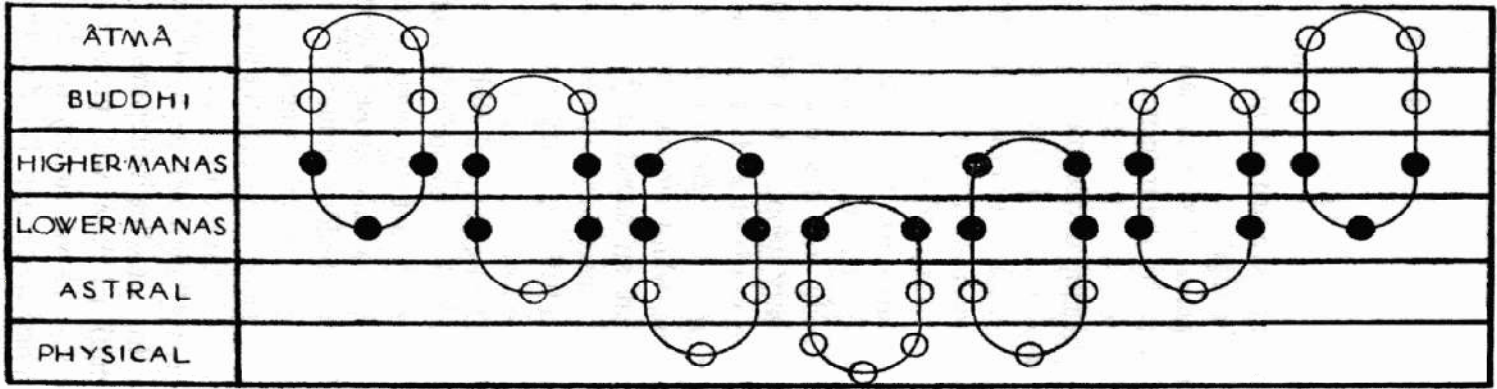
The habitat of the ego, the Thinker, the one who endures throughout all reincarnations, is on the higher mental plane.

The mental plane is the meeting-ground between the Higher and the Lower Selves. The "Ray", which the higher or divine part of man projects into the lower worlds in order to carry out the purposes of evolution, is a ray of lower mind, emerging from the higher mind.

The battleground of life to-day, for most men, is kâma-manas, the intermingling of mind with desire.

The consciousness of most men to-day is centred in their feelings, in the astral body. Hence, the next immediate step for them is to learn to master feelings, to control the astral body; and this, as we have seen, can be achieved only from the plane above, from the mind

THE SEVEN CHAINS OF THE EARTH SCHEME



The next step will be to raise the centre of consciousness from the astral to the mental world.

The very name "man" means the thinker, the being possessing mind.

Man, in Occultism, has been defined as that being in the universe, in whatever part of the universe he may be, in whom highest Spirit and lowest Matter are joined together by *Intelligence*.

The development of mind in man has been expedited a whole Round by the influence of the Lords of the Flame. In the next Round, the Fifth, the progress to be made in mental development must clearly be prodigious, and, to our limited minds as at present developed, in the nature of things inconceivably lofty.

These few considerations, it is submitted, constitute a formidable array, and scarcely call for further comment; they are their own emphasis of the crucial importance to man, at his present stage, of the mind and the mental body - not indeed as a final achievement, but as a necessary stepping-stone to that future of man which, in the words of a Master, "*is the future of a thing whose growth and splendour have no limit.*"

Nevertheless, whilst emphasizing one aspect of our work, and that an aspect unquestionably of great importance, it is necessary to preserve a careful sense of proportion and balance, giving to each element its due weight, and no more.

Hence, as Annie Besant, and C.W.Leadbeater have written, so far as the Theosophical Society is concerned, its great object is not so much to provide mental development as to raise those who are ready into responsiveness to buddhic influences, to re-awaken the sensitiveness of its members on a higher turn of the spiral, and to prepare

them for the new race, now starting on its way in the world.

The Society "does not deprecate mental development - far from it - but it prepares for the next stage, when intuitional love will produce harmony and brotherhood, and will employ the developed intellect to build a new civilisation, based on those ideals."

BOOKS QUOTED	AUTHOR	EDITION	ABBREVIATION
Ancient Wisdom	Besant, Annie	1897	AW
Astral Plane	Leadbeater,C.W.	1910	AP
Chakras	Leadbeater,C.W.	1927	Ch
Changing world	Besant, Annie	1909	CW
Clairvoyance	Leadbeater,C.W.	1908	C
Concentration	Wood, Ernest	1916	Con
Death and After	Besant, Annie	1901	DA
Devachanic Plane	Leadbeater,C.W.	1902	DP
Dreams	Leadbeater,C.W.	1903	D
Gods in exile	Van der Leeuw, J.J.	1926	GE
Hidden Life in Freemasonry	Leadbeater, C.W.	1926	HLF
Hidden Side of Things,Volume 1	Leadbeater, C.W.	1913	HSI
Hidden Side of Things, Volume 2	Leadbeater, C.W.	1913	HSII
How animals Talk	Long, W.J.	1919	HAT
Inner Life, Volume I	Leadbeater, C.W.	1910	ILI
Inner Life, Volume 2	Leadbteater, C.W.	1911	ILII
Introduction to Yoga	Besant, Annie	1908	IY
Invisible helpers	Leadbeater, C.W.	1922	IH
Karma	Besant, Annie	1897	K
Life after Death	Leadbeater, C.W.	1917	LAD
Man and his Bodies	Besant, Annie	1900	MB
Man Visible and Invisible	Leadbeater, C.W.	1902	MVI
Masters and the Path	Leadbeater, C.W.	1925	MP
Meditation for Beginners	Wedgwood, J.I.	1919	MFB
Monard	Leadbeater, C.W.	1920	M
Other Side of Death	Leadbeater, C.W.	1904	OSD
Reincarnation	Besant, Annie	1898	R
Science of the Sacrements	Leadbeater, C.W.	1920	SOS
Self and its Sheaths	Besant	1903	SS
Seven Principles of Man	Besant	1904	SP
Some Glimpsons of Occultism	Leadbeater, C.W.	1913	SGO
Study in Consciousness	Besant, Annie	1921	SC
Talks on the Path of Occultism	Besant, Annie & Leadbeater,C.W.	1926	TPO
Talks with a Class	Besant, Annie	1921	TC
Textbook of Theosophy	Leadbeater, C.W.	1914	TB
Theosophy	Besant, Annie		T
Theosophy and the New Psychology	Besant, Annie	1909	TNP

Thought-Forms	Besant, Annie & Leadbeater, C.W.	1905	TF
Thought-Power	Besant, Annie	1903	TP

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